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THE MERRY CLOWN A Lithograph by James Chapin

LITERARY *Cavalcade*

Volume 1

Number 1

October, 1948

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WITH THIS ISSUE, the youngest member of the *Scholastic* family of publications makes its debut. Yet *Literary Cavalcade* is not really a "new" magazine. It is a continuation, in richly expanded form, of the reading program for English classes that has been a part of *Scholastic* since it was launched 28 years ago. That program aimed to present to hungry young minds samples of the finest creative writing from contemporary sources. But in recent years we, at *Scholastic*, have felt more and more that the swift-moving big events and great issues of our times were crowding out of the weekly *Senior Scholastic* the literature of enduring value. No matter how important the writing on world affairs might be, it was nonetheless transitory. In *Literary Cavalcade* the program for English classes is given a permanent home in a monthly that may be kept and treasured.

MAURICE R. ROBINSON
President and Publisher

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OUR FRONT COVER

"The Merry Clown" is a lithograph by James Chapin, one of America's leading artists. Mr. Chapin, who has twice served as a member of the Jury of the National Scholastic Art Awards, holds painting awards from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Born in West Orange, New Jersey, in 1887, Mr. Chapin studied at Cooper Union and the Art Students League in New York City, and abroad at the Royal Academy of Antwerp, Belgium. He has executed numerous portraits of public figures and his works have been acquired by many private collectors and for the permanent collections of many museums and galleries. Mr. Chapin, who now teaches portraiture at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, strongly feels that art must be related to "living and human values."

"The Merry Clown," reproduced on our cover through the courtesy of Associated American Artists of New York City, is a striking example of Mr. Chapin's lithographic style and his ability to draw laughter into every line.

McCABE'S GIRL

By Maurice Barranger

HE WAS once the middleweight champion. That much I know. I've been through the records—looked at pictures taken years ago—and it's the man, all right. The same man I saw in the farmhouse that night. It's not so easy to check on the woman. After all, she was just his girl. I've found no pictures of her.

Sometimes I wake up in the night hearing that punching bag. It was the damndest thing. You're in a farmhouse, miles from nowhere. There's snow and sleet blowing around outside. An elderly couple take you into their kitchen and sit you down near the stove, and they make coffee for you, and all the time you can hear this drumming sound coming from the cellar.

It had to be a punching bag. Nothing else makes quite that sound. It's a peculiar rhythm you can't forget.

Neither the farmer nor his wife said anything about it. For all I know, they didn't hear it. A hearty pair—I'd say they were in the sixties—and they were bound and determined I should feel at home. I was listening to the sound, wondering about it, when it stopped. Pretty soon there were footsteps coming up a flight of stairs.

When I first saw him in the lamp-light, all I got was the old-fashioned turtle-neck sweater. He came in and walked across to the sink. He was about my height, and straight and slender except in the shoulders. Wide, heavy shoulders. Only his hair gave him away. Gray. And thin.

I remember he picked up a tumbler, filled his mouth, spat, took a few swallows. Then he turned, and he had the brightest pair of eyes I've ever seen. A leathery face, bony and thick-skinned and scarred around the eyes. A peculiar twist to one of the ears.

Nobody said anything and it dawned on me there'd been a hush from the moment this man had appeared. The farmer spoke my name; then, "Shake hands with Kid McCabe, the middleweight champion of the world."

It seemed to me there was a warning note in his voice. The fighter and I shook hands and I could feel the power of his arm. He made some remark about being glad to see me, and then he said, "What paper you on?"

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"No paper," I said, "I'm just a visitor. Hope you don't mind."

The old man broke in and explained the roads were bad; ice had been forming on the windshield of my car, and I'd had to stop. McCabe nodded and said, "Glad to have you," and then he told us he was going back downstairs and work two more rounds. He said it offhand, just like that. All the time, in the back of my mind, I had an idea the name McCabe was familiar.

My eye was attracted to the doorway. A girl was standing in the other room, just beyond the door. A slender girl; a woman, rather. I couldn't tell how old she might be. She was looking at me in a calm, level way.

McCabe finished what he had to say and started to leave. He said, "See you again," and went through the doorway. The girl went with him. I heard them going downstairs.

There we were, the old couple and myself, and the place was quiet except for the sleet on the window. Not a word out of either of them. The farmer lit another lamp. Then he said, "I'll take you up, now, if you're ready."

I picked up my valise and followed him. We were climbing the stairs when I remembered who Kid McCabe was. I said, "Kid McCabe was a great champion."

It seemed to me the old man was afraid. He answered in a whisper; one of those loud whispers: "Did you know he was here? Is that why you came?"

I told him I'd not even known the man was alive. That was true, though I knew by that time where I'd seen the name. Once in a while some sports writer mentions him among the famous ones of twenty years ago. A courageous fighter; a slugger who'd take three blows to get in one. The end

had been sudden for McCabe. I tried a question.

"Wasn't he hurt badly in his last fight?"

The old boy opened up, then. I think he'd been wanting to talk all along. He told me about the fight. How McCabe had hit the back of his head on the floor of the ring the last time he went down. In the eighteenth round. He'd seen the fight.

He rambled on, and it came out that McCabe had used this farm as a training camp in the old days. All the time, while he was talking, I was remembering more I'd read about McCabe. And about the girl. He'd had a girl friend. She'd been at the ringside and seen him go down; seen him carried off.

McCabe was unconscious a long time after the fight; so long they were scared he'd never come around. The old man said, "Some folks might say he never did."

"You mean he's—punch drunk?"

"No. Not like that." I thought his voice was going to crack. "He just doesn't remember. It did something to his mind."

He said, "McCabe remembers everything up to three days before the fight. That's all. That's all he knows. Always three more days. He keeps on training—goes right on—"

There it was. Can you imagine? Can you picture this McCabe? Training every day of his life for a fight, he'd lost twenty years ago. Working faithfully. Driving himself. Going around in a groove. Always three more days.

The old man was saying, "You'll be careful, won't you? We're scared folk'll say something."

I told him I understood. He said, "Good night," and mumbled something.

Breakfast was in the kitchen, just the farmer and his wife and myself. There was no sign of the fighter. It was still dark, but the snow had stopped and the air was clear. I started out to the barn to get my car.

There was a light in the barn, and when I got the doors open I saw him standing there in sweater and cap. I said, "Morning, McCabe," and he opened the car door for me and said, "You'll be there to the fight?"

I said I wouldn't miss it and told him he seemed to be in great shape. He looked pleased; gave me a grin. He turned and motioned, and suddenly she was standing beside him, the woman I'd seen the night before.

The fighter said, "I want you to meet my girl." She simply nodded. Then she spoke, and I thought she was speaking more to McCabe than to me.

"We're going to get married," she said. "After the fight."

The Challenge of Knowledge



The push of a button opens the dome to expose a 30-foot slice of sky.

Press Assn.

An address delivered at the dedication of the 200-inch telescope on Mount Palomar, California, on June 3, 1948.

A HUNDRED and five years ago, John Quincy Adams, 77 years of age, journeyed from his home in Massachusetts to Cincinnati, Ohio, to lay the cornerstone of the Astronomical Observatory. It was a long and fatiguing trip by stagecoach, by canal boat, by steamboat, and part of the way by the newly invented railroad train. Much of Mr. Adams' dedicatory address concerned the neglect of astronomy in the United States. We have been, he said, "So absorbed in the toil of converting the wilderness into a garden," that we have been indifferent to the sciences, and "particularly to the science of astronomy."

To our generation, a hundred years later, the significance of his address lies, perhaps, not so much in what he said — although his comment is historically illuminating — as in what he failed to say. And what he failed to say was what nobody could have foreseen a century ago, because in 1843 there was no evidence that the time might come when the lag between advancing knowledge and social control would threaten the existence of society itself.

Twenty years ago, when the 200-inch telescope project came up before our group in New York, one of the Trustees raised an objection. It was in the form of a question — a question which finds an echo everywhere today. "What are we going to do with our new knowledge?" he asked. "Aren't we acquiring more knowledge than we can assimilate?" The shattering events of the last two decades have underscored the relevancy of his query. Knowledge and destruction have joined in a Grand Alliance that has made the history of our generation a history of deepening horror.

Obviously the difficulty lies in the fact that there is no method of classifying knowledge into safe and unsafe categories. All knowledge has become dangerous. Indeed, knowledge has always been dangerous; for knowledge means power, and power can be used to degrade as well as to ennoble the life of man.

By Raymond B. Fosdick
President, The Rockefeller Foundation

The Mount Palomar telescope is man on tiptoe reaching for the meaning of the universe

Today, in dedicating this telescope, we are face to face with the problem of the unpredictable consequences of knowledge. We cannot even guess what will come from this mighty instrument, or to what ends the fresh insights which we gain here will be employed. When the giant cyclotron was built at the University of California, nobody was thinking of the atomic bomb. The cyclotron was conceived as an adventure in pure research. It was a symbol of the hunger for knowledge, an emblem of the unconquerable exploring urge within the mind of man.

And yet that cyclotron contributed materially to the development of one phase in the construction of the atomic bomb, just as this telescope may conceivably give us knowledge which, if we so choose, we can employ in the insanity of a final war. Years ago an Oxford professor, working in the field of theoretical mathematics, remarked that he loved his subject because it could never be prostituted to any useful purpose. But he was wrong. There is no segment of knowledge, whether in the physical sciences or the social sciences, whether in medicine or economics or astrophysics or anthropology, which cannot ultimately be employed to the detriment of mankind if that is what we deliberately elect to do with it. Indeed, I believe that if the social sciences were developed as the physical sciences have been, we might have a weapon which, in unscrupulous hands, would be as deadly as the atomic bomb.

In the face of this dilemma, what is our proper course of action? Do we stop building telescopes? Do we close down our cyclotrons? Do we forbid the extension of knowledge? Do we retreat to some safe, underground existence where we can barricade ourselves against our fears and the unwelcome intrusion of new ideas?

The questions answer themselves. Any attempt to fix boundaries beyond which intellectual adventure shall not be allowed to go, would return us to an animal existence in which mere survival was the only goal. The search for truth is the noblest expression of the human spirit. Man's insatiable desire for knowledge about himself, about his environment and the forces by which he is surrounded, gives life its



Raymond B. Fosdick

that knowledge is not enough. This telescope is not enough. The vast enterprise of men that is pushing out the boundaries of knowledge in glorious adventure on a score of frontiers—all this is not enough. Unless we can anchor our knowledge to moral foundations, the ultimate result will be dust and ashes—dust and ashes that will bury the hopes and monuments of men beyond recovery.

THE towering enemy of man is not his science but his moral inadequacy. Around the world today, laboratories supported by almost limitless resources are feverishly pushing their research in the development of physical and bacteriological weapons which overnight could turn this planet into a gigantic slaughterhouse. On what moral basis will the decision be made to use these weapons? What ethical restraints will have developed to curb the hysteria, fright and passion of men against such a blind paroxysm of destruction? For if this final Nemesis overtakes the pretensions of modern man, it will not be his science that has betrayed him, but rather the complete prostration of his moral values. It will not be this telescope and all that it symbolizes that have led him to the doorstep of doom; it will be the impotence and immaturity of his ethical codes.

There is a sense, of course, in which the problem we face is not new. Man's progressive accessions of power have always outstripped his capacity for control, and the gap between his morality and the physical force at his disposal has always been uncomfortably wide. But never before have his curiosity and ingenuity led him within the space of a few years to weapons by which he could completely obliterate his own institutions and decimate the planet on which he lives.

This may seem too somber a note to be sounded at the dedication of a mighty instrument whose purpose is in line with man's noblest instincts; but in the twenty years that this telescope has been under construction, the human race has lived through its greatest tragedy. We know now that knowl-

meaning and purpose, and clothes it with final dignity. We are false to ourselves and to our best instincts only when we turn our backs on truth or close our eyes when it beckons.

And yet we know, deep in our hearts,

edge is not a gift; it is a challenge. It is not merely an augmentation of facts; it is a test of human character. And our generation is presented with what may well be the final choice between the use of knowledge to build a rational world or its use to arm, for one last, desperate affray, the savage and uncivilized passions of mankind.

And yet I believe that in the crisis which we face, this telescope can furnish our stricken society with some measure of healing perspective. This great new window to the stars will bring into fresh focus the mystery of the universe, its order, its beauty, its power. It will dramatize the questions which mankind has always asked and to which no answers have been found, and perhaps can never be found. Why are we here on this dwarf planet? Are there other planets that have burst into consciousness like our own? What is this divine spark of awareness which we call consciousness? And finally, in the words and spirit of the Psalmist, what is man?

In the face of these supreme mysteries and against this majestic background of space and time, the petty squabbling of nations on this small planet is not only irrelevant but contemptible. Adrift in a cosmos whose shores he cannot even imagine, man spends his energies in fighting with his fellow man over issues which a single look through this telescope would show to be utterly inconsequential.

We need in this sick world the perspective of the astronomer. We need the detachment, the objectivity, the sense of proportion which this great instrument can bring to mankind. This telescope is the lengthened shadow of man at his best. It is man on tiptoe, reaching for relevancy and meaning, tracing with eager finger the outlines of order and law by which his little life is everywhere surrounded. There is nothing which so glorifies the human race, or lends it such dignity and nobility, as the gallant urge to bring this vast illimitable complexity within the range of human understanding. In the last analysis, the mind which encompasses the universe is more marvelous than the universe which encompasses the mind. "Astronomically speaking," said the philosopher, "man is completely negligible." To which the psychologist answered: "Astronomically speaking, man is the astronomer."

So we dedicate this instrument today in humbleness of spirit, but in the firm belief that among the activities and aspirations of man there is no higher peak than this. There is a real sense in which Mount Palomar is Mount Everest.



Mutiny

"Now if you'll look at the air route from Noumea to Auckland you'll see a speck in the ocean not far from the route from Australia to Noumea. That speck's an island. It's vital. Absolutely vital!" His chin jutted out. His stubby forefinger stabbed at the map. The vital speck was Norfolk Island.

There is no other island in the South Pacific like Norfolk. Lonely and lost, it is the only island in the entire ocean where no men lived before the white man came. Surrounded by giant cliffs, beat upon endlessly by the vast ocean, it is a speck under the forefinger of God, or Admiral Kester.

"You'll find some Americans down there," the admiral continued. "Building an airstrip. They're bogged down. Look." He handed me a dispatch from Norfolk: "TWO SITES CHOSEN X OPPOSITION TO BETTER SITE TERRIFIC X CAN WE IGNORE LOCAL WISHES X ADVISE X TONY FRY X."

"This man Fry," the admiral remarked, "is a queer duck. One of the best reserves I've seen. He wouldn't bother me with details unless something important had developed. Obviously, we can ignore local opinion if we have to."

He studied the map again. "They're the life lines." His broad thumb hit Guadal again. "We've got to have an airstrip on Norfolk. And a big one." He turned away from the map. "Now you run down to Norfolk. Take the old PBV. And you tell Fry you have my full authority to settle the problem."

The old PBV flew down from Noumea on a day of rare beauty. After six hours I saw a speck on the horizon. It grew rapidly into an island, and then into an island with jagged cliffs. Norfolk was below us. I remember clearly

every detail of that first view. Not much more than ten square miles. Forbidding cliffs along all shores. A prominent mountain to the north. Fine plateau land elsewhere.

"Oughtn't to be much trouble building an airstrip there," I mused aloft. "Run it right down the plateau. Throw a cross strip about like that, and you have an all-wind landing area. Looks simple. This guy Tony Fry must have things messed up."

"We'll land in that little bay," the pilot said.

"I don't see any," I replied.

"Between the cliffs," he said.

He went far out to sea and came in for his landing. But he had too much speed and zoomed over the island. We came roaring in, sped over a winding hill road leading up to the plateau and then right down the imaginary line I had drawn as the logical location for the airstrip. It was then that I saw the pines of Norfolk.

For on each side of that line, like the pillars of a vast and glorious cathedral,

• About the story . . .

This is a story about the descendants of the seamen on the *Bounty* who mutinied against Captain Bligh in 1789. To appreciate the background of Mr. Michener's tale it might be well to recall some of the events that followed the mutiny. The hated Bligh and 18 loyal seamen were set adrift in a small open boat. They reached Java after a journey of 4,000 miles — a feat of seamanship. Some of the mutineers were captured at Tahiti and executed. Others settled on Pitcairn Island, where they were not discovered until 1808. In 1856 their descendants were transferred to Norfolk Island, the scene of Mr. Michener's story.

When I returned to Noumea from the island of Vanicoro, Admiral Kester called me into his office. He said, "We were lucky at Coral Sea. It's the next battle that counts." He waved his hand over a map of the islands. His finger came to rest, I remember, on a large island shaped like a kidney, Guadalcanal.

"Some day we'll go into one of those islands. When we do, we've got to have a steady flow of planes from New Zealand and Australia. Now look!" Spreading his fingers wide he dragged them down the map from Bougainville, New Georgia and Guadal. He brought them together at Santo. "We have Santo. We'll keep it. It's the key. And we can supply Santo from Noumea. But if we ever need planes in an emergency, we must be able to fly them up to Noumea from New Zealand and Australia."

From *Tales of the South Pacific*. Copyright, 1947 by James A. Michener.

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They knew what they wanted
... and kept that spirit alive

By James A. Michener

Pulitzer Prize Winner for 1948

ran the pine trees, a stately double column stretching for two miles toward the mountain. "My God," I whispered to myself. "That's it. That's the problem."

We were so low we could see along the dusty road running between the columns. An old woman in a wagon was heading down to the sea. She looked up sharply as we roared overhead. And that was my first view of Teta Christian.

We landed on the third try. A tall, thin, somewhat stooped naval officer waved to us from the crumbling stone pier. It was Lt. (jg) Tony Fry, dressed in a sloppy shirt and shorts. He greeted us when we climbed ashore and said, "Glad to have you aboard, sir. Glad to have you aboard." He had twinkling eyes and a merry manner.

He led us through the crowd of silent islanders to a small stone cow shed not far from the pier. "But this cow shed is built of dressed stone," I said. "It's better than you see back home."

"I know," Tony said. "The convicts had to be kept busy. If there was nothing else to do, they built cow sheds."

"What convicts?" I asked.

"This island," he said to me, "is the old convict island. Everything you see along the shore was built by the convicts."

"From where?"

"From Australia. England sent her worst convicts to Australia. And those who were too tough for Australia to handle were sent over here. This isn't a pretty island," Fry said. "Or wouldn't be, if it could talk."

"Well!" I said, looking at Tony. "About this airstrip?"

He smiled at me quizzically. "You came down here to see about the airstrip?" I nodded. He grinned, an infectious, lovely grin showing his white and somewhat irregular teeth.

"I have a terrible premonition that

the trouble is that row of pine trees," I said.

Fry didn't bat an eye. He simply grinned warmly at me. "I'm glad it's your decision, not mine."

At this moment there was a commotion outside. "It's Teta!" voices cried. A horse, panting from his gallop, drew to a halt and wagon wheels crunched in the red dust. A high voice cried out, "Where is he? Where's Tony?"

"In there! In with the new American."

"Let me in!" the high voice cried.

And into our shed burst Teta Christian, something over ninety. She had four gaunt teeth in her upper jaw and two in her lower. Her hair was thin and wispy. But her frail body was erect. She went immediately to Tony. He took her by the hand. "Take it easy, now, Teta," he said.

She pushed him away and stood before me. "Why do you come here to cut down the pine trees?" she asked, her high voice rising to a wail.

"I . . ."

But Tony interrupted. "Be careful what you say, commander. It's the only adequate site on the island."

"You shut up!" old Teta blurted out. "You shut up, Tony."

"I merely came down to see what should be done," I said.

"Well, go back!" Teta cried, pushing me with her bony hand. "Get in the airplane. Go back. Leave us alone."

"We'd better get out of here," I said. "Where do I bunk?"

"That's a problem," Fry said, whimsically. "It's a tough problem."



"Anywhere will do me," I assured him. "Why not put up with you? I'll only be here one night."

Tony raised his eyebrows as if to say, "Want to bet on that?" He laughed again. "That's what the problem is, commander. I sort of don't think you should live with me." He fingered his jay-gee bar on his collar flap. "I . . . I . . ."

"Very well," I said aloud. "Anywhere will do."

I reached for my single piece of luggage. As I did so a chubby young girl of fifteen or sixteen came into the shed and ran up to Tony. To my utter disgust, I noticed that she was vacant-eyed and that her lower jaw was permanently hung open.

"This is Lucy," Fry said, patting the young girl affectionately on the shoulder. Lucy looked at me and grinned. "Hello," she said.

"We could find quarters for you in the old convict houses," Tony suggested. "Down here along the shore."

"Why don't you get in the plane and fly back?" old Teta whined.

"I can drive you over in the jeep," Fry suggested.

"I'm much more interested, really, in

surveying the island," I said. "Let's just drop the bag and get along."

"You tell him, Tony," Teta wailed. "You tell him the truth!"

Fry wiped his forehead. "Now look, Teta. You run along. Get us some orangeade fixed up. Get us a nice dinner for tonight." He pushed her out of the shed. We followed and climbed into his jeep. Lucy was already sitting in front.

"No, Lucy!" Fry said. "You'll have to get in back." As the girl climbed over the seats, Tony returned to the shed. In this instant a young Army lieutenant hurried up to the jeep.

"Boy, are we glad to see you!" he blurted out. "It's about time somebody came down here to straighten things up. We were all ready to start building the strip when Fry called the whole thing off. You got to be firm, commander," he whispered. "That old Teta is the worst of the lot."

I looked over my shoulder at Lucy. She was sitting there quietly, saying nothing, hearing nothing. "Don't bother about her, commander," the lieutenant said. "She's crazier than a bedbug." Fry left the shed and the Army man hurried off.

"That was the big prison," Tony said as we drove up the red road from the pier. "And that's Gallows Gate. They used to hang prisoners there for everyone to see. Had a special noose that never tightened up. Just slowly strangled them."

I studied the superb gate. The lava rock from which it was built was cleaner and fresher, more beautifully cut and matched than in 1847, when the magnificent structure was built. Proportioned like the body of a god, this gate was merely one of hundreds of superb pieces of construction. There were walls as beautiful as a palace at Versailles, old houses straight from the drawing boards of England, towers, blockhouses, salt works, chimneys, barns, a chapel, granaries, and lime pits, all built of gray lava rock, all superb and perfect. They clustered along the foreshore of Norfolk Island in grim memory of the worst convict camp England ever fostered. They moaned beneath the Norfolk pines when winds whipped in at night, for they were empty. They were dead and empty ruins.

I thought of the endless hours and pain that went into the building, the needless perfectionism, the human misery. Fry spoke in the grim silence: "And when any of the stone dressers or skilled masons died, the governor sent word back to England. And the word was passed along. The judges kept a sharp lookout for stone masons. Some

were sent here for life because they stole a rabbit."

When Tony dropped me off at my quarters he coughed once or twice. "I'm terribly sorry to leave you down here," he said. "But I think this is best."

"This will do me," I said.

"I'd have you up to my diggings," he continued. "But it would be terribly embarrassing to you. That's the mistake I made. You see, I board with old Teta Christian. She'd love to have you stay with her. The soul of hospitality. But if you did, she'd capture you the way she has me."

"The pine trees?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied. "The only good site on the island."

"Then why don't you cut them down and build the strip?"

Fry looked at me for more than a minute. His eyes were clear and joking. He had a sharp nose and chin. He was about thirty years old and didn't give a darn about anything or anybody. He was taking my measure, and although I was his superior officer I stood at attention. He punched me softly on the arm. "You see, commander," he said. "Old Teta Christian is the granddaughter of Fletcher Christian, the mutineer. All those people at the pier were Bounty

people. They don't push around easy." He winked at me and left.

"Bounty people!" I said to myself. "So this is where they wound up when they left Pitcairn Island? This paradise!"

And it was a paradise! Oh, it was one of the loveliest paradises in the vast ocean. Untouched by man for eons, it grew its noble pine trees hundreds of feet high and always straight. It developed a plateau full of food and protected its secrets by forbidding cliffs. I came to Norfolk for a day. I stayed a week, and then another. And I lived in a paradise.

Late that afternoon Tony drove down for me. I said, "We'll look the two sites over and I can fly back in the morning."

"Now don't rush things, commander," Tony replied. "We can study the island tomorrow. Old Teta asked a few of the Bounty people in for dinner. They want to meet you. Purely social."

"Fry, I don't want to be brusque about this, but the reason I'm down here is that Admiral Kester is pretty well browned off at the shilly-shallying. There's a war on!"

"That I'm aware of," Tony replied. "I'm in it."

"So if you don't mind, I'd like to see the two sites right now."



"Very well," Fry said. I was glad to see that Lucy was not waiting for us in the jeep. The fat little moron was becoming somewhat unnerving. But as we drove past the deserted ruins of the prison, she ran out into the road. "We better take her along," Tony said. "She never says much."

"The first site," Tony said, "is at the northwestern tip of the island." The location we had come to visit was disappointing indeed. To the east and south the mountain encroached on the potential field. Landings would be difficult. Cliffs prohibited much more than a four thousand foot runway. Any cross runway for alternate winds was out of the question. "Not much of a location for an airstrip," I said.

"Not too good," Tony agreed. "Want to see the other?"

"I'd like to," I answered. He drove south until he came to a sight which made me blink my eyes. There, on this lonely island, a rustic gem of architecture. It was built of wood and brown stone among a grove of pines. It was so different in spirit from the precise, brutal buildings on the water front that I must have shown my surprise.

"The old Melanesian Mission," he said. "From this spot all the Hebrides and Solomons were Christianized. This is where the saints lived."

"The saints?" I asked.

"Yes. Lucy's great uncle was one. He went north from here. To an island called Vanicoro. The natives roasted him alive. And during his torment he kept shouting, 'God is love. Jesus saves.' The old men of the village decided there must be something to his religion after all. They set out in canoes to a near-by island and brought another missionary back. A whole village was converted. There were lots of saints around here."

"Was he . . ." I inclined my head toward the rear seat.

"Sure. They all are, more or less. Listen to names at the party tonight. Christian, Young, Quintal, Adams. Do they mean anything to you?"

"The mutineers from the Bounty?" I asked.

"That's right. And Nobbs and Buffet, the missionaries that followed. The mutineers have been intermarrying for more than a hundred years. I guess they're all a little nuts." The frankness of Fry's comment startled me. I turned to look at Lucy, expecting to find her in tears. She grinned at me, with her mouth open.

"This is the other site," Fry said. We were on a little hill. Before us spread the heart of the plateau, with the pines laid out along an ideal runway.

"Let's get going tomorrow," I suggested.

"Good idea. Let's eat now." Tony started toward old Teta's farm. We had to enter the avenue of pine trees down which I had seen Teta hurrying that morning. As we passed under their vast canopy noise from the jeep was muffled. Eighty feet above us, on either side, tree after tree, the pines of Norfolk raised their majestic heads. There was a wind from the south, that wind which sweeps up from the Antarctic day after day. It made a singing sound among the pines. Nobody said anything, not Tony nor I nor Lucy.

We entered a garden filled with all kinds of flowers, shrubs, and fruit trees. This was Teta Christian's home. "When the Bounty folk first came here, commander," she said in her high thin voice, "my father, Fletcher Christian, chose this place for his farm. He liked the view down that valley." She drew the curtain aside and showed me her prospect, a valley of lovely pine trees, a thin stream, and curves lost in the vales that swept down to the sea. "My father, Fletcher Christian, planted all this land. But I put in the orange trees." It was uncanny, oranges growing so luxuriantly beside the pines.

"When my father, Fletcher Christian, came to this island," she said, "he and Adams Quintal looked over the land. Am I boring you, commander?"

"Oh, no! Please, go ahead. I'm very interested."

"He and Adams Quintal looked over the land. Nobbs Buffet and Thomas Young were along. They decided that they would not live along the shore. That was prison land."

"Were there no prisoners there?" I asked.

"Oh, no. After the great mutiny all the prisoners were taken away. Two years later they gave the empty island to us. I am the last person living who came here from Pitcairn," she moaned on. "I was five years old when we sailed. I remember Pitcairn well, although some people say you can't remember that far back." She lapsed into the strange Pitcairn dialect, composed of sea-faring English from the Bounty modified by Tahitian brought in by girls the mutineers had stolen. Her friends argued with her for a moment or two in the impossible jargon. They were Quintals and Nobbs and Buffets and endless Christians.

"They still don't believe me." Teta laughed. Her mind wandered. I never knew whether the original Christian, that terrible-souled mutineer, was her grandfather or her great-grandfather, or someone even farther back.

"So my father, Fletcher Christian, and Adams decided that they would have nothing whatever to do with the prison lands. Let them die and bury their dead down there. Let those awful places go away. My father, Mr. Fletcher Christian, was a very good man and he helped to build the Mission which you saw today. He would not take any money for his work. My father said, 'If the Lord has given me this land and this valley, I shall give the Lord my work.' Am I boring you with this talk, commander?"

I assured her again and again that night that I was not bored by the memories of Norfolk Island. I made my point so secure that she promised to visit me in the morning and to show me the records of the first settlement of the mutineers. Accordingly, at 0900 the jeep drove up to my quarters. Tony and Lucy were in front. Old Teta sat in the back. "We'll just go down the road a little way," she said. She led us to the largest of the remaining prison buildings. It was hidden behind a wall of superb construction. This wall was more securely built, more thoroughly protected with corner blockhouses and ramparts, than the jail itself.

"What did they keep in here?" I asked. "The murderers?"

"Oh, no!" she said in a high voice of protest. "The jail keepers."

"But that twenty-foot wall? The broken glass?"

"To keep the prisoners out. In case they mutinied. They did, too. All the time. This was an island of horrors," she said.

"Up past the postoffice old Teta led us, up two flights of stairs and into a large, almost empty room. It was the upper council chamber.

Teta went to an old cupboard built into the wall. From it she took a series of boxes, each thick with dust and tied with red string. She peered into several boxes and finally selected one. Banging it on the table until her white hair was lost in a cloud, she said, "This is the one." From it she took several papers and let them fall through her idle hands onto the table.

"This is the one," Teta said. It was a petition to the governor signed by Fletcher Christian, Adam Quintal, Nobbs Buffet and Thomas Young: "Because God has been kind in his wisdom to bring us here, it is proposed that an avenue of pine trees that grow upon this island and nowhere else in the world be planted and if we do not live to see them tall our children will." The petition was granted.

"I ought to go out to survey the field," I said.

"Well, you needn't go till afternoon," Tony replied. "Tell the PBY to lay over a day. Some of the villagers are having a picnic lunch for us."

I attended. The more I heard of Teta's stories the more interested I became. After we had eaten and I had consumed half a dozen oranges she said, "Would you like to see the old headstones? In the cemetery?"

I was indeed interested. She led me to the cemetery, this old, old woman who would soon be there herself. It lay upon a gently rising hillside near the ocean. "In this section are the Bounty people," she said. There were the white headstones, always with the same names: Quintal, Young, Adams, Christian. "I am a Quintal," she said. "I married this man." She pointed to the gravestone of Christian Nobbs Quintal. Beside it were the inevitable tiny stones.

"My father, Fletcher Christian, is buried over there," she said. "He's not really buried there, either. He was lost at sea. And down here are the convict graves. This corner is for those that were hung." I studied the dismal relics. The tragic story of hatred, sudden death, breaks and terrible revenge was perpetuated in the weathering stones.

"They buried the mutineers over here," old Teta whined.

I looked at the close cluster of graves. English peasant names, Irish peasants. "What did they do?" I asked.

"These are the men who killed the guards and buried their bodies in the bridge. There where we had our picnic. Bloody Bridge."

She looked over the graves to the restless sea. "My father, Fletcher Christian, said he wanted none of their bloody buildings. So the Bounty people tore down the houses we were given along the shore. When my father said that."

It was now too late for me to inspect the airstrip that day, so I told the PBY pilot to take off early next morning and return to Noumea without me. I would send a dispatch when I got my work done. That night I sat in Teta's house by the ruined stables and listened as she told us about the days on Pitcairn. "My father, Fletcher Christian," she said, "was known as the leader of the mutineers. But Captain Bligh was a very evil man. My father told me that Mr. Christian had to do what he did. There are some who say it is a shame Tahitian girls went to Pitcairn, too, but my father, Fletcher Christian, said that if Tahitian girls didn't go, who would? And that is a question you cannot answer. I am half Tahitian myself. Nobody in our family has ever married

outside the mutiny people. That is, the Pitcairn people. A lot of people think this is bad." She spoke to her island friends in Pitcairn, and they laughed.

"What we are laughing about, commander, is a funny old man came here some time ago. Measured all our heads. He was a German. He made pictures of who everybody married and then proved we were all crazy people. His book had pictures, too. I was one of the people that wasn't crazy, but Nobbs over there," and she pointed to an islander, "his picture was in the front of the book. He was very crazy!"

"You might as well stay here the night," Fry said, but I disagreed. I preferred to sleep in my own quarters.

I went up to the proposed airstrip next morning. Tony was not visible, but the energetic young Army lieutenant was wheeling his tractors into position.

"Well," he said, "I guess we're ready to go now."

I was about to nod when I looked over toward the Norfolk pines and there was old Teta. She was in her wagon, the reins tied to the whip. Just watching. "You can start clearing away the brush," I said.

"But the trees, commander!"

"We'll wait a few days on that," I said.

I walked over to study one of the trees. It was six feet through the base, had scaly bark. Its branches grew out absolutely parallel to the ground. In perfect symmetry it rose high into the air. I thought, "It was a tree like this that Captain Cook saw when he inspected Norfolk. He was the first man, white or black, ever known to visit the island. It was a tree like this that made him say, 'And the hospitable island will be a fruitful source of spars for our ships.'"

"I'm going down to the Mission," old Teta said as she drove up. "Would you like to ride along?"

At the Mission we tied the horse. The chapel was even lovelier than I had thought from the road. Inside, it was made of colored marble, rare shells from the northern islands, wood from the Solomons, and carvings from the Hebrides. Not ornate, it was rich beyond imagination. Gold and silver flourished. Each pew end was set in mother-of-pearl patiently carved by some island craftsman. Scenes from Christ's life predominated in the intaglios, but occasionally a free Christian motif had been worked out. The translucent shell spoke of the love that had been lavished upon it.

The windows perplexed me. They reminded me of something I had seen elsewhere, but the comparison I made

was so silly that I did not even admit it to myself.

"The windows," Teta said, "were made by a famous man in England and sent out here on a boat."

"Good heavens!" I said, "it is Burne-Jones." How wildly weird his ascetic figures looked in that chapel.

"Bishop Patteson built this chapel," old Teta whined on. But her memories were vague. She got the famous Melanesian missionaries all confused. She had known each of them, well, Selwyn and Patteson and Paton.

"My brother, Fletcher Christian, went up north with good Bishop Selwyn," she said. "They went to Vanicoro where my uncle, Fletcher Christian, was burned alive. He converted a whole village by that. He was a very saintly man. My brother was also named Fletcher Christian. That tablet up there is to him, not to my uncle. My brother came home one day and knelt down. It was right after my father died at sea. He said, that is my brother Fletcher Christian said, 'I am going to follow God! I am going with Bishop . . .'" She faltered. "I am going with Bishop Patteson." He went up north to an island right near Vanicoro. Bali-hai. He was a very good missionary." Teta sat in the now-empty Mission, deserted because its function was fulfilled.

Back at my quarters that afternoon I was in a confusion of thoughts. No one could tell how urgently we might need the airstrip on Norfolk, nor how soon. Thought of this steeled me to the inescapable conclusion. The pines of Norfolk must go. An end to this silly nonsense!

I walked slowly down to the old stone cow shed where the Army had its headquarters. "We'll start in the morning," I told them. "Get the trees out of there."

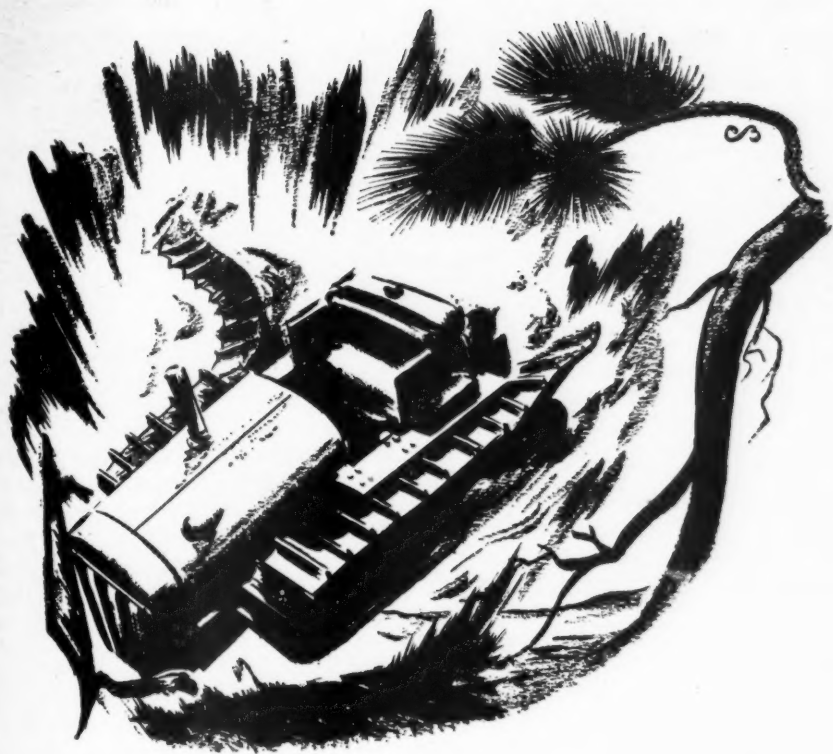
"It's only three now, sir," the eager young lieutenant said. "We could get a couple down this afternoon!"

"Time enough in the morning," I said. "Get your gear ready."

"It's been ready for two weeks," he said coldly.

I felt honor-bound to tell the islanders that the irrevocable decision had been made. I planned to do so that evening, at Teta's. I climbed the dusty road from the prison camp to the free lands and the pine-filled valleys.

When I reached the avenue of pines my resolution wavered. I said, "I can't permit this thing! The loveliest monument in the South Pacific completely destroyed. No, by God! I'll do everything I can. Up to the hilt. I've got to!" And I hurried back to the prison lands, the compressed, pain-saddened shore, and sent an urgent dispatch to Admiral



Kester. It was a long one. Gave the dimensions of the two fields. Told him that the north field could have no cross runway and would be hampered by the small mountain. I said there was great opposition to the central field. I closed the dispatch as follows: "REQUEST PERMISSION PROCEED NORTH FIELD."

About ten o'clock that night I got my answer. It was brief, and in it I could hear many oaths from the admiral. His dispatch had its mind made up: "Re UR 140522 X NEGATIVE X REPEAT NEGATIVE X KESTER."

But the dispatch relieved me. I clutched it in my hand and walked up the hill to the plateau where the Bounty people lived. I walked down the long avenue of trees and thought, "You are not dying by my hand."

Teta and Tony were alone. Lucy, of course, sat in a corner. "My father, Fletcher Christian, was a very good sailor," Teta said. "It was a great pity for this island when he was killed at sea. It was at the Cascade Landing. There are only two places where boats can possibly land on Norfolk. It reminds me of Pitcairn in that respect. My grandfather, Fletcher Christian, said that if a man could sail in and out of Pitcairn Island, he was indeed a sailor. I have been told my father was the best sailor on either island, but he was killed at sea. At Cascade Landing, which is very rough and brutal. A very bad place to land in any weather. The waves

crushed his boat and threw him on the rocks. Right at the landing. Then pulled him back out to sea and we never got the body. I think we could have found the body, but there were no other sailors as brave as my father, and no one searched for him until the storm was over."

"Bad news," I said.

"From Noumea?" Tony asked.

"Yes. I wired the admiral."

"I know," Tony said. "I did the same thing."

"He made the decision," I said.

"I know," Tony replied. "I passed the buck to you. And you passed it to the admiral."

"Teta," I said quietly. "We start to take the trees down tomorrow."

The old mutineer looked at me and started to speak. No words came. She licked her six gaunt teeth. "I remember when my father, Fletcher Christian, planted those trees," she said. "I ran along beside the men. They laid out two lines. There was no road there, then." The old woman dropped her head on her hands. The lamp threw an eerie glow upon her white hair.

"We'll have to start tomorrow. In the morning," I said. I waved the dispatch.

I don't know who spread the word. I can't believe it was Teta, and Lucy was sitting tight-lipped in the corner when I left. Perhaps the islanders heard it from the Army. At any rate, early next morning a crowd of people gathered at the pine trees. As I approached with the

Army engineers, Nobbs Quintal, whose photograph had served as the frontispiece to the book which proved that all Norfolk Bounty people were degenerate, tipped his hat and asked me if he could speak. I clenched my hands and thought, "Here it comes!"

"Commander," Nobbs Quintal said, "We know the trees have to go. We know there's war. My son is at war. In Egypt. Old Teta has five grandsons in the Army. We know you've tried to change the airport. We heard about your message yesterday. But won't you wait one more day? We want to take some pictures of the trees."

They had an old box camera and some film. An American soldier had a pretty good miniature camera, and an Australian had a very good French job. All morning they took pictures of the trees. The Quintals and the Christians and Nobbses and all the others stood beneath the trees, drove wagons along the dusty road, and made family groups.

All film was used up by two o'clock.

The engineers moved in. With rotary saws they cut part way through the first tree. Then two bulldozers shoved against the trunk. The great pine broke loose and almost imperceptibly started to fall. As it did so, it caught for a moment, twisted in the air like a soldier shot as he runs forward. The tree twirled, mortally wounded, and fell into a cloud of dust.

The island people said nothing as their living cathedral was desecrated. The old Bounty people watched the felling of the trees as simply one more tragedy in a long series.

"You'll have to move back," the Army engineers said. "We've got to blast the stumps."

We moved to a safe distance and watched the engineers place sticks of dynamite among the roots of each fallen tree. Then a detonator was attached and the wires gathered together at a plunger box. The charge was exploded. Like old hulks of men who can be pushed and bullied about the slums of a large city, the stumps of Norfolk were pushed and harried into a dump.

I could not go back to Teta's that night. I was lonely, and miserable in my loneliness. I stayed with some Australians who had built their camp near the line of trees. "It's a bloody shame," one of them said in barbarous Anzac cockney. "One bloody line of trees on the bloody island, and we put the bloody airport there!"

Our thoughts were broken by a crashing explosion outside. We rushed to the door of our tent and saw in the moonlight a cloud of dust rising by the trees.

"Fat's in the fire!" an Australian cried.

We hurried across the field to where the explosion had taken place. We found one of the smaller bulldozers blown to bits. Dynamite.

I left the Australians and headed for the stone stables. As I did so, I caught a glimpse of a woman running ahead of me. I hurried as fast as I could and overtook fat Lucy. I grabbed her by the shoulders and started to shake her, but she burst into a heavy flow of tears and blubbered so that I could make nothing of her answers. I turned, therefore, toward old Teta's house and did so in time to see her door open and close. "Come along, Lucy," I said.

In Teta's house I found Fry with the old woman. Teta was not puffing, but she seemed out of breath. Fry had obviously not moved for some time. "My father, Fletcher Christian," Teta said, "always told us that it did not matter whether you lived on Norfolk Island or Pitcairn Island so long as you lived in the love of God. My mother did not believe this. She said that this island was very good for people who had never lived on Pitcairn. But she could not see how a little more food and steamers from Australia could make up for the life we had on Pitcairn. She said that she would rather live there, on the cliff by the ocean, than anywhere else in the world. But when my father died at sea, she had a chance to go back to her home on Pitcairn. A boat was going there. I begged her to go on the boat, and take us all. But she said, 'No, Fletcher is buried out there at sea. My place is here.'"

The old woman droned on and on. Toward morning she left us. I sat drumming my fingers on the table and Tony said, "Come on! We'll drive Lucy home."

"I don't want to go home!" she cried. "Get in the jeep!" Tony commanded, adding in a low voice, "You've done enough for one night."

The crazy girl climbed in behind us. At the hill Tony drove very slowly and pushed on the horn. Kids from everywhere piled out of the old house and came screaming in the night. "It's Lucy!" they shouted. "Lucy comin' home in the American jeep!"

"So she blew up the bulldozer?" I asked.

"That's right," Tony said sleepily. "She and Teta."

"Fry," I said coldly. "Those two women could never in a million years figure out how to explode dynamite." A guard stopped us.

"Good evening, commander," he said. "Saboteurs about. Blew up a half-track."

About the author . . .

James A. Michener is a writer on education who with his first published work of fiction, *Tales of the South Pacific*, won the Pulitzer Prize for the best novel of 1948. Born in 1907 of Quaker-farmer stock, Michener had (as he terms it) an "itching foot" and worked his way across the continent before he was fifteen. After being graduated from Doylestown (Pa.) H. S. he went to Swarthmore on a scholarship. He was graduated with highest honors. Then came more travel, teaching and writing on education. "My lifework has been education," Michener says, "and I guess the early teachers I had were responsible." When war broke out, Michener waived his Quaker principles and joined the Navy. *Tales of the South Pacific* came to life during Michener's spare time in the islands about which he writes.

"They couldn't figure it in a million years, Tony."

"It was an old bulldozer anyway," Fry said as we drove back to Teta's. "Something somebody in the States didn't want."

"We need that bulldozer for the airstrip."

"I don't think you do," Tony replied. "As a matter of fact, I'm sure you don't. Because that's the one that broke down this afternoon and the Army man said it couldn't be fixed." He brought the jeep to a stop by Teta's fence.

"Fry," I said. "You could be court-martialed for this."

Tony turned to face me. "Who would believe you?" he asked.

"By God, man," I said grimly. "If I had the facts I'd press this case."

"With whom?" he asked. "With Ghormley? With Admiral Kester? You tell your story. Then I'll tell mine. Can you imagine the look on Kester's face? There was an old, useless bulldozer. A couple of women blew it up as a last gesture of defiance. A woman ninety and a crazy girl. That story wouldn't stand up. Especially if I said how you came here to do a job and just couldn't make up your mind to knock down a few trees. It's too fantastic, commander. Kester would never believe that."

"I could understand your helping them, in peacetime," I said. "But this is war."

"That's when people need help, commander!" Fry said quietly. "Not when everything is going smoothly."

"It's all so futile," I said, looking away toward the stone stables. "Blowing up one bulldozer."

"Commander," Fry said with quiet passion. "Right now I can see it. Some

sawed-off runt of a Jew in Dachau prison. Plotting his escape. Plotting to kill the guards. Working against the Nazis. One little Hebrew. So futile. One little Jew. But by God, I'm for him. I'm on his side, commander." Fry punched me lightly on the shoulder. I hate being mauled.

"These people on Norfolk can't be dismissed lightly," he continued. "They're like the little Jew. Some smart scientists can come down here and prove they're all nuts. But do you believe it? We took down a map the other day, Teta and I. We figured where her grandsons are fighting. She can't remember whether they're grandsons or great-grandsons. All the same names. They're in Africa, Malaya, India, New Guinea, England. One was at Narvik, Crete. They may be stupid, but they know what they want. They knew what they wanted when they knocked that Nazi Bligh off his ship. They knew what they wanted when they turned their backs on the prison lands. Refused convict homes all ready waiting for them. The saints knew what they wanted when they went north as missionaries. I'm on their side. If blowing up a broken bulldozer helps them keep the spirit alive, that's OK with me."

Tony submitted a vague report on the bulldozer. I endorsed it and sent it on to my own files in Noumea. I don't know where it is now. When Fry handed it to me he said, "Doesn't it seem horrible? The trees all down. We don't destroy one single memento of the prison days. Not one building do we touch. The airstrip runs twenty yards from the stone stables, but they're safe as the Gallows Gate. We won't touch a rock of Bloody Bridge, where they buried the murdered guards. But the cathedral of the spirit, that we knock to hell."

"Fry," I said. "The Melanesian Mission's safe."

"That thing!" Fry shouted. "A rustic English mission built on a savage island. A sentimental chapel with Burne-Jones' emaciated angels on an island like this. If you wanted to build an airstrip, why couldn't you have built it over there? Let the real chapel stand?"

"My father, Fletcher Christian," Teta said on my last night, when graders were working by flares to speed the airstrip. "He told us that God meant to build Norfolk this way. A man has to love the island to get here, because there are no harbors and no landings. My father said, 'A man has to fight his way ashore on this island!' That's what he was doing when the boat crashed on the rocks. Am I boring you with this, commander?"

By Lucille Fletcher

Suppose YOU picked up the phone and overheard
a cold-blooded murder being planned . . .

Sorry, Wrong Number

CHARACTERS

MRS. STEVENSON
FIRST MAN
SECOND MAN
(George)
OPERATOR
CHIEF OPERATOR

SERGEANT DUFFY
THIRD MAN (a
Western Union
Operator)
INFORMATION
FOURTH MAN (a
hospital clerk)

SOUND: Number being dialed on telephone — then the busy signal.

MRS. STEVENSON (a querulous, self-centered neurotic) (after waiting a bit): Oh — dear . . .!

SOUND: Slams down receiver impatiently and dials operator again.

OPERATOR (on filter): This is Operator.

MRS. STEVENSON: Operator? I've been dialing Murray Hill 3-0093 now for the last three-quarters of an hour, and the line is always busy. But I don't see how it could be busy that long. Will you try it for me, please?

OPERATOR (on filter): I will try it for you. One moment, please.

MRS. STEVENSON (rambling, full of self-pity): I don't see how it could be busy all this time. It's my husband's office. He's working late tonight, and I'm all alone here in the house. My health is very poor — and I've been feeling so nervous all day.

OPERATOR (on filter): Ringing Murray Hill 3-0093.

SOUND: Telephone ringing. All clear. It rings three times. The receiver is picked up at the other end.

MAN'S VOICE (filter) (slow, heavy, tough voice): Hello.

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello . . . ? (puzzled) Hello. Is Mr. Stevenson there?

MAN'S VOICE (as though he had not heard): Hello . . . (louder) Hello!

2D MAN'S VOICE (filter) (also over telephone but farther away. A very distinctive quality): Hello.

1ST MAN: Hello, George?

GEORGE: Yes, sir.

MRS. STEVENSON (louder and more imperious): Hello. Who's this? What number am I calling, please?

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1ST MAN: I am in the office with our client. He says the coast is clear for tonight.

GEORGE: Yes, sir.

1ST MAN: Where are you now?

GEORGE: In a phone booth.

1ST MAN: Very well. You know the address. At eleven o'clock the private patrolman goes around to the bar on Second Avenue for a beer. Be sure that all the lights downstairs are out. There should be only one light visible from the street. At eleven-fifteen a subway train crosses the bridge. It makes a noise, in case her window is open and she should scream.

MRS. STEVENSON (shocked): Oh! . . . Hello! What number is this, please?

GEORGE: Okay. I understand.

1ST MAN: Make it quick. As little blood as possible. Our client does not wish to make her suffer long.

GEORGE: A knife okay, sir?

1ST MAN: Yes. A knife will be okay. And remember — remove the rings and bracelets — and the jewelry in the bureau drawer. Our client wishes it to look like simple robbery.

SOUND: The conversation is suddenly cut off. Again Mrs. Stevenson hears a persistent buzzing signal.

MRS. STEVENSON (clicking phone): Oh . . .!

SOUND: Buzzing signal continues. She hangs up slowly.

MRS. STEVENSON (frozen with horror): How awful. How unspeakably — (a brief pause).

SOUND: She picks up phone and dials Operator. Ring once.

OPERATOR (filter): You call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON (unnerved and breathless): Operator. I — I've just been cut off.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry, madam. What number were you calling?

MRS. STEVENSON: Why — it was supposed to be Murray Hill 3-0093 — but it wasn't. Some wires must have crossed — I was cut into a wrong number — and I — I've just heard the most dreadful thing — a — a murder — and (imperiously) — operator, you'll simply have to retrace that call at once.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry, madam. I do not understand.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh — I know it was a wrong number, and I had no business listening, but these two men — they were cold-blooded fiends — and they were going to murder somebody — some poor innocent woman — who was all alone — in a house near a bridge. (Frantic) And we've got to stop them — we've got to —

OPERATOR (filter) (patiently): What number were you calling, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: That doesn't matter. This was a wrong number. And you dialed it. And we've got to find out what it was — immediately!

OPERATOR (filter): But — madam —

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh — why are you so stupid? Look — it was obviously a case of some little slip of the finger. I told you to try Murray Hill 3-0093 for me. You dialed it — but your finger slipped. And I was connected with some other number — and I could hear them, but they couldn't hear me. Now, I simply fail to see why you couldn't make that same mistake again — why you couldn't try to dial Murray Hill 3-0093 in the same sort of careless way —

OPERATOR (filter) (quickly): Murray Hill 3-0093? I will try to get it for you, madam.

MRS. STEVENSON (sarcastically): Thank you.

SOUND: Telephone ringing — then the busy signal.

OPERATOR: The line is busy.

MRS. STEVENSON (frantically clicking receiver): Operator! Operator!

OPERATOR (filter): Yes, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: You didn't try to get that wrong number at all. I asked you explicitly. And all you did was dial correctly. Now I want you to trace that call. It's my civic duty — it's your civic duty — to trace that call — and to apprehend those dangerous killers — and if you won't . . .

OPERATOR (filter) (sweetly): I will connect you with the Chief Operator.

SOUND: Ringing. Then phone is picked up.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): This is the Chief Operator.

MRS. STEVENSON: Chief Operator. I want you to trace a call. A telephone call. Immediately. I don't know where it came from, or who was making it, but it's absolutely necessary that it be tracked down. Because it was about a murder. Yes, a terrible, cold-blooded murder of a poor innocent woman — tonight — at eleven-fifteen.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): I see.

MRS. STEVENSON (high-strung, demanding): Can you trace it for me?

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): It depends, madam.

MRS. STEVENSON: Depends on what?

CHIEF OPERATOR: It depends on whether the call is still going on. If it's a live call, we can trace it. If it's been disconnected, we can't.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh — but — but of course they must have stopped talking to each other by now. That was at least five minutes ago — and they didn't sound like the type who would make a long call.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): Well — I can try tracing it. Now — what is your name, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson. But, listen —

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter) (interrupting): And your telephone number?

MRS. STEVENSON: Plaza 4-2295. But if you go on wasting all this time —

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): And what is your reason for wanting this call traced?

MRS. STEVENSON: My reason? Oh — no reason. I mean — I merely felt very strongly — that something ought to be done about it. These men are killers — they're dangerous — they're going to murder this woman — at eleven-fifteen — and I thought the police —

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): Have you told the police?

MRS. STEVENSON: No. But — in the meantime —

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): Well, Mrs. Stevenson, I seriously doubt whether we could make this check for you, and trace this call just on your say-so as a private individual.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh — for heaven's sake. You mean to tell me — I can't report a murder — without getting tied up in all this red tape? Why, it's idiotic! All right! I'll call the police!

SOUND: *She slams down receiver.*

MRS. STEVENSON: Ridiculous!

SOUND: *She dials Operator.*

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: The Police Department — please!

OPERATOR (filter): Ringing the Police Department.

SOUND: *Ring twice.*

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter) (bored

with his night duty assignment): Police Station, Precinct 43, Duffy speaking.

MRS. STEVENSON: Police Department? Oh. This is Mrs. Stevenson — Mrs. Elbert Smythe Stevenson of 53 North Sutton Place. I'm calling up to report a murder. I mean (fumbling for words) — the murder hasn't been committed yet. I just overheard plans for it over the telephone — over a wrong number that the operator gave me. I've been trying to trace down the call myself — but everybody is so stupid — and I guess in the end you're the only people who could do anything.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter) (not too impressed by all this): Yes, ma'am.

MRS. STEVENSON (trying to impress him): It was a perfectly definite murder. I heard their plans distinctly. Two men were talking — and they were going to murder some woman at eleven-fifteen tonight. She lived in a house near a bridge.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): Yes, ma'am.

MRS. STEVENSON: And there was a private patrolman on the street. He was going to go around to Second Avenue. And there was some third man — a client — who was paying to have this poor woman murdered. They were going to take her rings and bracelets and use a knife. . . . Well — it's unnerved me dreadfully — (reaching the breaking point) — and I'm not well —

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): I see. (Stolidly) When was all this, ma'am?

MRS. STEVENSON: About eight minutes ago. Oh — (relieved) — then you can do something? You do understand —

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): And what is your name, ma'am?

MRS. STEVENSON (impatient): Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): And your address?

MRS. STEVENSON: 53 North Sutton Place. That's near a bridge. The Queensboro Bridge, you know — and we have a private patrolman on our street . . . and Second Avenue —

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): And what was that number you were calling?

MRS. STEVENSON: Murray Hill 3-0093. But that wasn't the number I overheard. I mean Murray Hill 3-0093 is my husband's office. He's working late tonight — and I was trying to reach him to ask him to come home. I'm an invalid, you know — and it's the maid's night off — and I hate to be alone — even though he says I'd be perfectly safe as long as I have the telephone right beside my bed.

SERGEANT DUFFY (stolidly) (filter): Well — we'll look into it, Mrs. Stevenson, and see if we can check it with the telephone company.

MRS. STEVENSON (getting impatient): But the telephone company said they couldn't check the call if the parties had stopped talking. I've already taken care of that.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter) (a faint hint of sarcasm): Oh yes?

MRS. STEVENSON (high-handed): Personally I feel you ought to do something far more immediate and drastic than check the call. By the time you track it down — they'll already have committed the murder.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter) (giving her the "brush off"): Well — we'll take care of it, lady. Don't worry.

MRS. STEVENSON: I'd say the whole thing calls for a search — a complete and thorough search of the whole city. I'm very near the bridge — and I'm not far from Second Avenue — and I know I'd feel a whole lot better if you sent around a radio car at once!

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): And what makes you think the murder's going to be committed in your neighborhood, ma'am?

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh — I don't know. Only the coincidence is so horrible. Second Avenue — the patrolman — the bridge.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): Second Avenue is a very long street, ma'am. And do you happen to know how many bridges there are in the city of New York alone? Not to mention Brooklyn, Staten Island, Queens, and the Bronx? How do you know there isn't some little house out on Staten Island — on some little Second Avenue you've never heard about? How do you know they were even talking about New York?

MRS. STEVENSON: But I heard the call on the New York dialing system.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): How do you know it wasn't a long-distance call you overheard? Look, lady, supposing you hadn't broken in on that telephone call? Supposing you'd got your husband the way you always do. Would this murder have made any difference to you then?

MRS. STEVENSON: I suppose not. But it's so inhuman — so cold-blooded.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): A lot of murders are committed in this city every day, ma'am. If we could do something to stop 'em, we would. But a clue of this kind that's so vague isn't much more use to us than no clue at all.

MRS. STEVENSON: But — surely —

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): Unless, of course, you have some reason for think-

Facing Page

Actress Agnes Moorehead portrays Mrs. Stevenson before microphone.

Photos courtesy Columbia Broadcasting System

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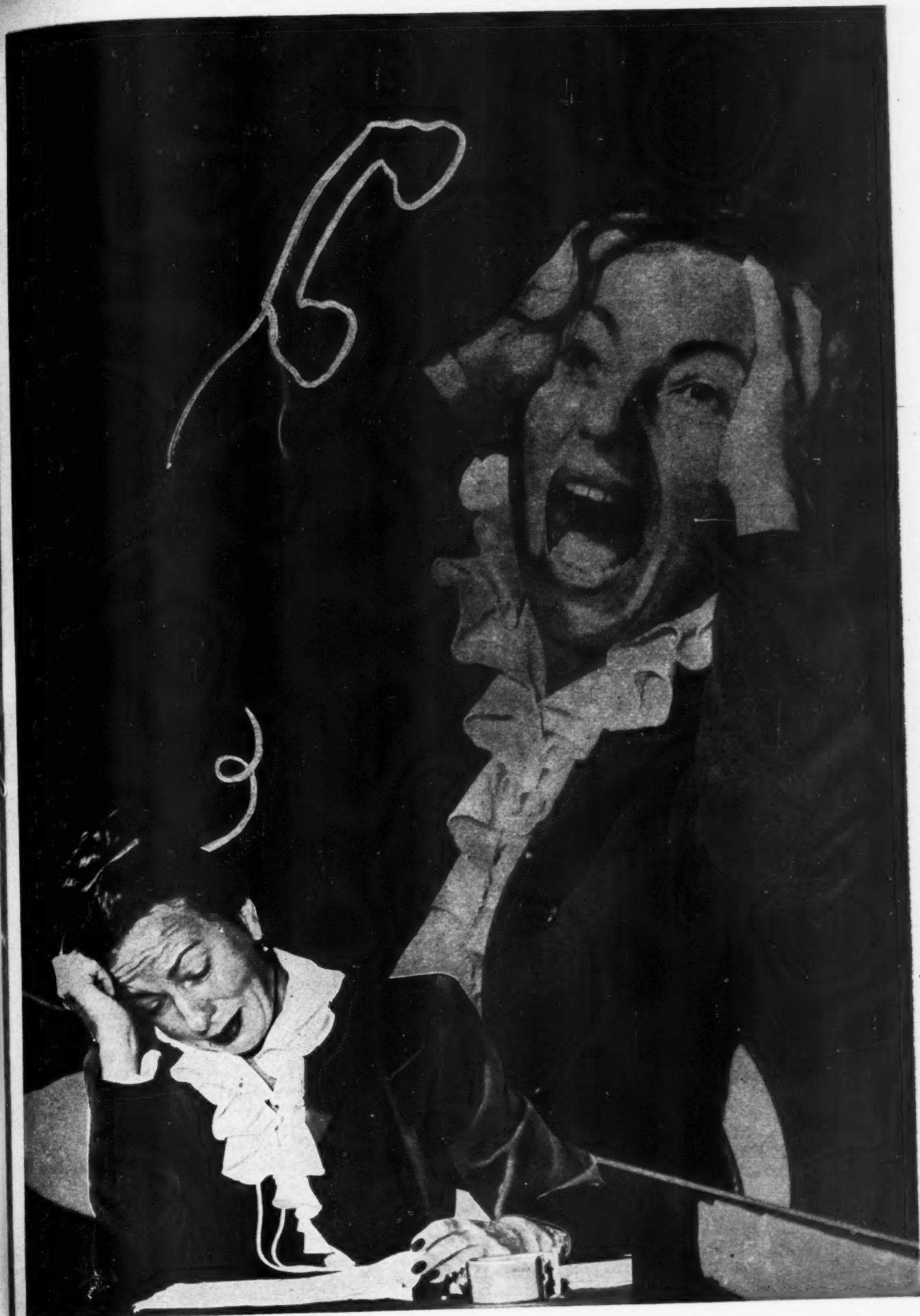
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ing this call is phoney — and that someone may be planning to murder you.

MRS. STEVENSON: Me? Oh — oh, no — I hardly think so. I — I mean why should anybody? I'm alone all day and night. I see nobody except my maid, Eloise. She's a big two-hundred-pounder — she's too lazy to bring up my breakfast tray — and the only other person is my husband, Elbert. He's crazy about me — adores me — waits on me hand and foot — has scarcely left my side since I took sick twelve years ago. . . .

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter): Well, then, there's nothing for you to worry about. And now, if you'll just leave the rest of this to us —

MRS. STEVENSON (not completely mollified): But what will you do? It's so late . . . it's nearly eleven now.

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter) (more firmly): We'll take care of it, lady.

MRS. STEVENSON: Will you broadcast it all over the city? And send out squads? And warn your radio cars to watch out — especially in suspicious neighborhoods — like mine —

SERGEANT DUFFY (filter) (very bored): Lady, I said we'd take care of it. And if you'll please hang up —

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh. . . .

SOUND: *She slams down the receiver hard.*

MRS. STEVENSON: Idiot! (Pause) Now, why did I do that? Now he'll think I am a fool! (Pause) Oh — why doesn't Elbert come home? Why doesn't he?

SOUND: *She dials Operator.*

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Operator — will you ring that Murray Hill 3-0093 number again? I can't think what's keeping him so long!

OPERATOR (filter): I will try it for you, madam.

SOUND: *Ring. Then busy signal.*

OPERATOR (filter): The line is busy.

MRS. STEVENSON (nasty): I can hear it. You don't have to tell me. I know it's busy. . . .

SOUND: *She slams down the receiver.*

MRS. STEVENSON (nervously querulous): If I could only get out of this bed for a little while. If I could get a breath of fresh air — or just lean out the window — and see the street. . . .

SOUND: *The phone bell rings. She picks it up instantly.*

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello. Elbert? Hello. Hello. Hello. Oh — what's the matter with this phone? HELLO . . . HELLO. . . .

SOUND: *She slams down the receiver. A second's pause. The phone rings again, once. She picks it up.*

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello? Hello . . .

Oh, for Heaven's sake, who is this? Hello, HELLO!

SOUND: *She slams down receiver. Dials Operator.*

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON (very annoyed and imperious): Hello, Operator, I don't know what's the matter with this telephone tonight, but it's positively driving me crazy. I've never seen such inefficient, miserable service. Now — I'm an invalid, and I'm very nervous, and I'm not supposed to be annoyed. But . . .

OPERATOR (filter): What seems to be the trouble, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: Well — everything's wrong. The whole world could be murdered for all you people care. And now — my phone keeps ringing.

OPERATOR (filter): Yes, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: Ringing and ringing and ringing every five seconds or so — and when I pick it up, there's no one there!

OPERATOR (filter): I am sorry, madam. I will test it for you.

MRS. STEVENSON: I don't want you to test it for me. I want you to put that call through — at once!

OPERATOR (filter): I am afraid that is not possible, madam.

MRS. STEVENSON: Not possible? And why — may I ask?

OPERATOR (filter): The system is automatic, madam. If someone is trying to dial your number, there is no way to check whether the call is coming through the system or not — unless the person who is trying to reach you complains to his particular operator.

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, of all the stupid — and meanwhile I've got to sit here in my bed, suffering every time that phone rings . . . imagining . . .

OPERATOR (filter): I will try to check it for you, madam.

MRS. STEVENSON: Check it. Check it. That's all anybody can do. Oh — I'm going out of my mind with all you people. . . .

SOUND: *She slams down the receiver. Almost instantly the phone rings. She picks up the receiver.*

MRS. STEVENSON (her nerves getting scratchier and scratchier): Hello. HELLO! Stop ringing, do you hear? Answer me. Who is this? Do you realize you're driving me crazy? Who's calling me? What are you doing it for? Now stop it — stop it. I say. HELLO. HELLO! If you don't stop ringing me, I'm going to call the police — do you hear? THE POLICE!

SOUND: *She slams down the receiver.*

MRS. STEVENSON (sobbing nervously): If Elbert would only come home!

SOUND: *The phone rings again sharply.*

MRS. STEVENSON: Let it ring. Let it go on ringing. It's a trick of some kind. And I won't answer it. I won't — even if it goes on ringing all night.

SOUND: *The phone suddenly stops — then silence.*

MRS. STEVENSON (a terrified note in her voice): Now what's the matter? Why did they stop ringing all of a sudden? (Hysterically) What time is it? Five to eleven . . . they've decided something. They're sure I'm home. They heard my voice answer them just now. That's why they've been ringing me — why no one has answered me —

SOUND: *She dials Operator.*

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Give me the Police Department.

SOUND: *Operator puts call through. Busy signal.*

OPERATOR (filter): The line is busy.

MRS. STEVENSON: Busy? But — that's impossible. The Police Department can't be busy. There must be other lines available.

OPERATOR (filter): The line is busy. Shall I ring them for you later?

MRS. STEVENSON (frantic): No — no! I've got to speak to them now — or it may be too late. You've got to get someone for me.

OPERATOR (filter): What number do you wish to speak to, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON (desperately): I don't know. But there must be someone to protect people, besides the police department. A — detective agency. . . .

OPERATOR (filter): You will find all detective agencies listed in the Classified Directory, madam.

MRS. STEVENSON: But I don't have a Classified. I mean — I'm too nervous to look it up — and I don't know —

OPERATOR (filter): I will give you information.

MRS. STEVENSON (agonizedly): No — no. (Furiously) Oh — you're being spiteful, aren't you? You don't care, do you, what happens to me? I could die — and you wouldn't care. (She sobs).

SOUND: *Hangs up receiver. Phone rings.*

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh — stop it — stop it. I can't stand any more.

SOUND: *She picks up receiver.*

MRS. STEVENSON (yelling frenziedly into phone): Hello. What do you want? Stop ringing, will you? Stop it . . . Oh (in a more subdued voice). I'm sorry. Yes. This is Plaza 4-2293.

3RD MAN (filter): This is Western Union. I have a telegram here for Mrs. Elbert Stevenson. Is there anyone there to receive the message?

MRS. STEVENSON (trying to calm herself): I am Mrs. Stevenson.

3RD MAN (filter): The telegram is at

follows: Mrs. Elbert Stevenson, 53 North Sutton Place, New York, New York. Darling. Terribly sorry. Tried to get you for last hour, but line busy. Leaving for Boston eleven P.M. tonight, on urgent business. Back tomorrow afternoon. Keep happy. Love. Signed, Elbert.

MRS. STEVENSON (*breathlessly, almost to herself*): Oh — no —

3RD MAN (*filter*): That is all, madam. Do you wish us to deliver a copy of the message?

MRS. STEVENSON: No. No thank you.

3RD MAN (*filter*): Very well, madam. Good-night.

SOUND: *Hangs up.*

MRS. STEVENSON (*mechanically*): Good-night.

SOUND: *She hangs up.*

MRS. STEVENSON (*suddenly bursting out*): No. No — I don't believe it. He couldn't do it. Not when he knows I'll be all alone. It's some trick —

SOUND: *She dials Operator.*

OPERATOR (*filter*): Your call, please?



MRS. STEVENSON: Murray Hill 3-0093.

OPERATOR (*filter*): You may dial that number direct, madam . . .

SOUND: *She cuts Mrs. Stevenson off.*

MRS. STEVENSON (*wretchedly*): Oh . . .

SOUND: *You hear her nervously dialing the number. It comes through, ring after long ring. No answer.*

MRS. STEVENSON: He's gone. Elbert — how could you? How could you —

SOUND: *She hangs up the phone.*

MRS. STEVENSON (*sobs, pitying herself*): But I can't be alone — tonight. I can't. If I'm alone one more second, I'll go mad. I don't care what he says — or what the expense is — I'm a sick . . .

SOUND: *She dials Information.*

INFORMATION (*filter*): This is Information.

MRS. STEVENSON: I want the telephone number of Henschley Hospital.

INFORMATION (*filter*): Henschley Hospital? Do you have the address, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: No. It's somewhere in the seventies. It's a very small, private, and exclusive hospital where I had my appendix out two years ago. Henschley — H-e-n-c-h-l-e-y —

INFORMATION (*filter*): One moment.

MRS. STEVENSON: Please hurry. And please — what is the time?

INFORMATION (*filter*): I do not know, madam. You may find out the time by dialing Meridian 7-1212.

MRS. STEVENSON (*irritated*): Oh. for Heaven's sake . . .

INFORMATION (*filter*): The number

of Henschley Hospital is Butterfield 7-0105, madam.

MRS. STEVENSON: Butterfield 7-0105.

SOUND: *She hangs up before she finishes speaking, and you hear her dialing number even as she speaks — then ring.*

4TH MAN (*solid, practical*) (*filter*): Henschley Hospital. Good evening.

MRS. STEVENSON: Nurses' Registry.

4TH MAN (*filter*): Who was it you wished to speak to, please?

MRS. STEVENSON (*high-handed*): I want the nurse's registry, at once. I want a trained nurse. I want to hire her immediately. For the night.

4TH MAN (*filter*): I see. And what is the nature of the case, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: Nerves. I'm very nervous. I need soothing — and companionship. You see — my husband is away — and I'm —

4TH MAN (*filter*): Have you been recommended to us by any doctor?

MRS. STEVENSON: No. But I really don't see why all this catechizing is necessary. I want a trained nurse. I was a patient in your hospital two years ago. And after all, I do expect to pay this person for attending me.

4TH MAN (*filter*): We quite understand that, madam. But these are busy times, you know. Registered nurses are very scarce just now — and our superintendent has asked us to send people out only on cases where the physician in charge feels it is absolutely necessary.

MRS. STEVENSON (*high-handed*): Well, it is absolutely necessary. I'm a sick woman. I — I'm very upset. Very. I'm alone in this house — and I'm an invalid — and tonight I overheard a telephone conversation that upset me dreadfully. In fact (*beginning to yell*) if someone doesn't come at once — I'm afraid I'll go out of my mind —

4TH MAN (*filter*) (*calmly*): I see. Well — I'll speak to Miss Phillips as soon as she comes in. And what is your name, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: Miss Phillips? And what time do you expect her in?

4TH MAN (*filter*): I really don't know, madam. She went out to supper at eleven o'clock.

MRS. STEVENSON: Eleven o'clock! But it's not eleven yet! (*She cries out*) Oh — my clock has stopped. I thought it was running down. What time is it?

4TH MAN (*filter*) (*nauseating*): Just fifteen minutes past eleven. . . .

SOUND: *Telephone receiver being lifted on the same line as Mrs. Stevenson's.*

MRS. STEVENSON (*crying out*): What was that?

4TH MAN (*filter*): What was what, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: That — that click

— just now — in my own telephone. As though someone had lifted the receiver off the hook of the extension telephone downstairs.

4TH MAN (*filter*): I didn't hear it, madam. Now — about this —

MRS. STEVENSON (*terrified*): But — I did! There's someone in this house. Someone downstairs — in the kitchen. And they're listening to me now. They're . . . (*screams.*)

SOUND: *She hangs up. — Then silence.*

MRS. STEVENSON (*in a suffocated voice*): I won't pick it up. I won't let them hear me. I'll be quiet — and they'll think . . . (*with growing terror*). But if I don't call someone now — while they're still down there — there'll be no time. . . .

SOUND: *She picks up the receiver and dials Operator. Ring three times.*

OPERATOR (*filter*): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON (*in a desperate whisper*): Operator. I — I'm in desperate trouble. I —

OPERATOR (*filter*): I cannot hear you, madam. Please speak louder.

MRS. STEVENSON (*still whispering*): I don't dare. I — there's someone listening. Can you hear me now?

OPERATOR (*filter*): No, madam.

MRS. STEVENSON (*desperately*): But you've got to hear me. Oh — please. You've got to help me. There's someone in this house. Someone who's going to murder me. And you've got to get in touch with the . . .

SOUND: *Click of receiver being put down in Mrs. Stevenson's line.*

MRS. STEVENSON (*bursting out wildly*): Oh — there it is. He's put it down — he's put down the extension phone. He's — coming up . . . (*her voice is hoarse with fear*) He's coming up the stairs. Give me the Police Department . . . the police. . . .

OPERATOR (*filter*): One moment, please —

SOUND: *Call is put through. Phone rings at other end. On second ring Mrs. Stevenson starts to scream. She screams twice as the phone continues to ring. On the fourth scream we hear the sound of a subway train as it roars over a nearby bridge. It drowns out all sound for a second. Then it passes and we hear the phone still ringing at the other end. The telephone is picked up.*

SERGEANT DUFFY (*filter*): Police Station, Precinct 43. Duffy speaking. (*A pause.*)

SERGEANT DUFFY (*filter*) (*louder*): Police Department. Sergeant Duffy speaking.

GEORGE (*same distinctive voice as in beginning of play*): Sorry. Wrong number.

SOUND: *Hangs up.*

Portrait of Alessandro Del Borro (?)
by Andrea Sacchi (?) Italian, 1599-1661



AT THE outbreak of World War II in 1939 the directors of the art museums in Berlin, discounting Hermann Goering's boast that Allied planes would never darken the skies over Germany, removed the art masterpieces in their care and stored them for safekeeping. Some were hidden a thousand feet below ground in the salt mines at Merkers, Germany; others were put away in the flak tower in Berlin. In April, 1945, the paintings in the salt mines were discovered by General Patton's Third Army. A month later the flak tower was set afire during the liberation of Berlin. The paintings there were destroyed.

In December, 1945, the 202 most important paintings were sent to the United States for further protection. We had no intention of confiscating them and in March, 1948, General Lucius Clay requested that the pictures be returned to Germany to prove our good faith. They were then temporarily shown in the National Gallery in Washington. The exhibition drew an all-time record crowd and it was felt that the paintings ought to be exhibited as widely as possible before their return. Fifty-two of the most fragile items were returned to Germany and a traveling exhibition through twelve of the leading U. S. art museums was arranged for the remaining masterpieces.

The pictures now on tour represent the most important group of old masters ever to be exhibited in the United States. Five are reproduced on these pages.

The Berlin

Itinerary of Exhibition for Remainder of Tour

Detroit Institute of Arts, Sept. 3 — Sept. 23
Cleveland Museum of Art, Sept. 30 — Oct. 20
Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Oct. 26 — Nov. 15
De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, Nov. 29 — Dec. 19
Los Angeles County Mus., Dec. 29 — Jan. 18
City Art Museum of St. Louis, Jan. 25 — Feb. 14
Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Feb. 19 — Mar. 11
Toledo Museum of Art, Mar. 15 — Mar. 31



Madonna and Child with Saint John
By Raphael, Italian, 1483-1520



Malle Babbe, Witch of Haarlem
By Frans Hals, Dutch, 1580-1666

n Masterpieces



Portrait of Hieronymus Holzschuher
By Albrecht Durer, German, 1471-1528

All photos by Raymond and Raynond, courtesy the Metropolitan Museum of Art



The Man with the Golden Helmet
By Rembrandt, Dutch, 1606-1669

FATHER had been away, reorganizing some old upstate railroad. He returned in an executive mood and proceeded to shake up our home. In spite of my failure as a singer, he was still bound to have us taught music. We boys were summoned before him and informed that we must at once learn to play something. We might not appreciate it now, he said, but we should later on. "You, Clarence, will learn the violin. George, you the piano. Julian—well, Julian is too young yet. But you older boys must have lessons."

I was appalled at this order. It seemed a disaster to lose any more of my freedom. The days were already too short for our games after school...

George sat at the piano in the parlor, and faithfully learned to pound out his exercises. He had all the luck. He was not an inspired player, but at least he had some ear for music. He also had the advantage of playing on a good robust instrument, which he didn't have to be careful not to drop. Furthermore, he did not have to tune it. A piano had some good points.

But I had to go through a blacker and more gruesome experience. It was bad enough to have to come in from the street and the sunlight and go down into our dark little basement where I took my lessons. But that was only the opening chill of the struggle.

The whole thing was uncanny. The violin itself was a queer, fragile, cigar-boxy thing, that had to be handled most gingerly. And then my teacher, he was queer too. He had a queer pickled smell.

I dare say he wasn't queer at all really, but he seemed so to me, because he was different from the people I generally met. He was probably worth a dozen of some of them, but I didn't know it. He was one of the violins in the Philharmonic, and an excellent player; a grave, middle-aged little man—who was obliged to give lessons.

He wore a black, wrinkled frock coat, and a discolored gold watch-chain. He had small, black-rimmed glasses; not tortoise-shell, but thin rims of metal. His violin was dark, rich, and polished, and would do anything for him.

The violin is intended for persons with a passion for music. I wasn't that kind of person. I liked to hear a band play a tune that we could march up and down to, but try as I would, I could seldom whistle such a tune afterward. My teacher didn't know this. He greeted me as a possible genius.

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Clarence's efforts to learn to play were
a nightmare to everyone but Father

By Clarence Day

The Noblest Instrument

He taught me how to hold the contraption, tucked under my chin. I learned how to move my fingers here and there on its handle or stem. I learned how to draw the bow across the strings, and thus produce sounds...

Does a mother recall the first cry of her baby, I wonder? I still remember the strange cry at birth of that new violin.

My teacher, Herr M., looked as though he had suddenly taken a large glass of vinegar. He sucked in his breath. His lips were drawn back from his teeth, and his eyes tightly shut. He snatched the violin from me, examined it, readjusted its pegs, and comforted it gently, by drawing his own bow across it. It was only a new and not especially fine violin, but the sounds it made for him were more natural—they were classifiable sounds. They were not richly musical, but at least they had been heard before on this earth.

He handed the instrument back to me with careful direction. "Now," he said, nervously.

I slowly raised the bow, drew it downward...

This time there were two dreadful cries in our little front basement. One came from my new violin and one from the heart of Herr M.

We got through the afternoon somehow, but it was a ghastly experience.

Part of the time he was maddened by the mistakes I kept making, and part of the time he was plain wretched. He covered his eyes. He looked often at his watch, even shook it as though it had stopped; but he stayed the full hour.

That was Wednesday. What struggles he had with himself before Friday, when my second lesson was due. I can only dimly imagine. He came back to recommence teaching me, but he had changed—he had hardened. Instead of being cross, he was stern; and instead of sad, bitter. He talked to himself, under his breath; and sometimes he took bits of paper, and did little sums on them, gloomily, and then tore them up.

During my third lesson I saw the tears come to his eyes. He went up to Father and said he honestly felt sure I'd never be able to play.

Father didn't like this at all. He said he felt sure I would. He dismissed Herr M. briefly—the poor man came stumbling back down in two minutes. In that short space of time he had gallantly gone upstairs in a glow, resolved upon sacrificing his earnings for the sake of telling the truth. He returned with his earnings still running, but with the look of a lost soul about him. He was low in his mind, and he talked to himself more than ever.

But he no longer struggled. He accepted this thing as his destiny. It was a grotesque, indeed a hellish experience, but he felt he must bear it.

He wasn't the only one—he was at least not alone in his sufferings. Mother, though expecting the worst, had tried to be hopeful about it, but at the end of a week or two I heard her and Margaret talking it over. I was slaughtering a scale in the front basement, when Mother came down, and stood outside the door in the kitchen hall and whispered, "Oh, Margaret!"

I watched them. Margaret was baking a cake. She screwed up her face, raised her arms, and brought them down with hands clenched.

"I don't know what we shall do, Margaret."

"The poor feller," Margaret whispered. "He can't make the thing go."

This made me indignant. They were making me look like a lubber...

I now began to feel a determination to master this thing. I saw only



place his voice was powerful and stormy, and he let it out at full strength, and kept on letting it out with a vigor that stunned his opponents. As a second gift, he was convinced at all times that his opponents were wrong. Hence, even if they did win a point or two, it did them no good, for he dragged the issue to some other ground then, where he and Truth could prevail. When Mother said it surely was plain enough that I had no ear, what was his reply? Why, he said that the violin was the noblest instrument invented by man. Having silenced her with this solid premise he declared that it followed that any boy was lucky to be given the privilege of learning to play it. No boy should expect to learn it immediately. It required persistence. Everything, he had found, required persistence. The motto was, Never give up.

Consequently our front basement continued to be the home of lost causes.

Of course, I kept begging Herr M. to let me learn just one tune. I knew that, in my hours of practicing, a tune would be a comfort. That is, for myself. Here again I never gave a thought to the effect upon others.

Herr M., after many misgivings, chose as simple a thing as he could find for me—for me and the neighbors.

It was spring now, and windows were open. That tune became famous.

What would the musician who had tenderly composed this air, years before, have felt if he had foreseen what an end it would have, on Madison Avenue; and how, before death, it would be execrated by that once peaceful neighborhood?

Even horrors when repeated grow old and lose part of their sting. But those I produced were, unluckily, never the same. To be sure, this tune kept its general structure the same, even in my sweating hands. There was always the place where I climbed unsteadily up to its peak, and that difficult spot where it wavered, or staggered, and stuck; and then a sudden jerk of resumption—I came out strong on that. Every afternoon when I got to that difficult spot, the neighbors dropped whatever they were doing to wait for that jerk, shrinking from the moment, and yet feverishly impatient for it to come.

But what made the tune and their anguish so different each day? I'll explain. The strings of a violin are wound at the end around pegs, and each peg must be screwed in and tightened till the string sounds just right. Herr M. left my violin properly tuned. But suppose a string broke, or that

somehow I jarred a peg loose. Its string then became slack and soundless. I had to re-tighten it. Not having an ear, I was highly uncertain about this. I just screwed her up tight enough to make a strong reliable sound.

Things now began to be said to Mother which drove her to act. She explained to Father that the end had come at last. Absolutely. "This awful nightmare cannot go on," she said.

Father pooh-poohed her.

She cried. She told him what it was doing to her. He said that she was excited, and that her descriptions of the sounds I made were exaggerated and hysterical—must be. She was always too vehement, he shouted. She must learn to be calm.

She endeavored to shame him. She told him what awful things the neighbors were saying about him, because of the noise I was making, for which he was responsible.

He couldn't be made to look at it that way. If there really were any unpleasantness then I was responsible. He had provided me with a good teacher and a good violin—so he reasoned. In short, he had done his best, and no father could have done more. If I made hideous sounds after all that, the fault must be mine. He said that Mother should be stricter with me, if necessary, and make me try harder.

This was the last straw. I couldn't try harder. When Mother told me his verdict I said nothing, but my body rebelled. Self-discipline had its limits—and I wanted to be out: it was spring. I skimmed my hours of practice when I heard the fellows playing outside. I came home late for lessons—even forgot them. Little by little they stopped.

Father was outraged. His final argument, I remember, was that my violin had cost twenty-five dollars; if I didn't learn it the money would be wasted, and he couldn't afford it. But it was put to him that my younger brother, Julian, could learn it instead, later on. Then summer came, anyhow, and we went for three months to the seashore; and in the confusion of this Father was defeated and I was set free.

In the autumn little Julian was led away one afternoon, and imprisoned in the front basement in my place. I don't remember how long they kept him down there, but it was several years. He had an ear, however, and I believe he learned to play fairly well. This would have made a happy ending for Herr M. after all; but it was some other teacher, a younger man, who was engaged to teach Julian. Father said Herr M. was a failure.

that I was appearing ridiculous. That stung my pride. I hadn't wanted to learn anything whatever about fiddles or music, but since I was in for it, I'd do it, and show them I could.

All during the long winter months I worked away at this job. I gave no thought, of course, to the family. But they did to me. Our house was heated by a furnace, which had big warm air pipes; these ran up through the walls with wide outlets into each room, and sound traveled easily and ringingly through their roomy, tin passages. My violin could be heard in every part of the house. If visitors came they soon left. Mother couldn't even sing to the baby. She would wait, watching the clock, until my long hour of scale-work was over, and then come downstairs with a shriek at me that my time was up.

It was a hard winter for Mother. She sometimes pleaded with Father, but no one could ever tell Father anything. He continued to stand like a rock against stopping my lessons.

Schopenhauer, in his rules for debating, shows how to win a weak case by insidiously transferring an argument from its right field, and discussing it instead from some irrelevant but impregnable angle. Father knew nothing of Schopenhauer, and was never insidious, but, nevertheless, he had certain natural gifts for debate. In the first

Oliver Twist . . . scenes from the film

● Of the many novels that Charles Dickens wrote, one of the best-loved is *Oliver Twist*. Now the story of Oliver has been brought to the screen in a technicolor film made by J. Arthur Rank in England. How Oliver was born in a workhouse and grew up always hungry — how he was apprenticed to Mr. Sowerberry, the coffin-maker, and ran off to London — how he fell in with the Artful Dodger and Fagin and Sykes and was taught to steal — and the adventures that happened after that — you will find them all in the film. It would be a good idea, too, to read *Oliver Twist* if you haven't. It is one of the October selections of the TEEN AGE BOOK CLUB.



1. "Please, sir, I want some more!" Oliver is chosen by boys in the workhouse to ask for a second helping.



Cruikshank drawing for scene 3. The film was directed by David Lean, produced by Ronald Neame, the team who made *Great Expectations*.



3. The bookseller warns Mr. Brownlow that the Artful Dodger is picking his pocket. It is Oliver who is caught. Original drawing of this scene by Cruikshank is above.



2. In London Oliver is welcomed with false cordiality by Fagin, is given his first lesson in pocket picking.



4. Bill Sykes, wild with rage at Nancy because she has betrayed him, cruelly beats her to death.



5. With the police closing in on him Sykes hides on the roof, taking helpless Oliver along as a hostage.

The wind was a torrent of darkness
among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed
upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight
over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding —
Riding — riding —
The highwayman came riding, up to
the old inn-door.

He'd a French cocked-hat on his fore-
head, a bunch of lace at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches
of brown doe-skin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his
boots were up to the thigh!
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,
His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle; under the
jewelled sky.

Over the cobbles he clattered and
clashed in the dark inn-yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the
shutters, but all was locked and
barred;

He whistled a tune to the window, and
who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her
long black hair.

And dark in the dark old inn-yard
a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face
was white and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness,
his hair like mouldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daugh-
ter,

The landlord's red-lipped daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard
the robber say —

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm
after a prize tonight,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold
before the morning light;
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry
me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though
hell should bar the way."

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce
could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the case-
ment! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came
tumbling over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moon-
light,

(Oh, sweet black waves in the
moonlight!)

Then he tugged at his rein in the moon-
light, and galloped away to the West.

He did not come in the dawning; he
did not come at noon;

The Highwayman

By Alfred Noyes

And out o' the tawny sunset, before the
rise o' the moon,
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon,
looping the purple moor,
A red-coat troop came marching —
Marching — marching —
King George's men came marching, up
to the old inn-door.

They said no word to the landlord, they
drank his ale instead,
But they gagged his daughter and bound
her to the foot of her narrow bed;
Two of them knelt at her casement,
with muskets at their side!

There was death at every window;
And hell at one dark window;
For Bess could see, through her case-
ment, the road that he would ride.

They tied her up to attention, with
many a sniggering jest;
They had bound a musket beside her,
with the barrel beneath her breast!
"Now keep good watch!" and they
kissed her. She heard the dead man
say —

Look for me by moonlight;

Watch for me by moonlight;

*I'll come to thee by moonlight, though
hell should bar the way!*

She twisted her hands behind her; but
all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers
were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the dark-
ness, and the hours crawled by like
years,
Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,

Cold, on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it! The
trigger at least was hers!

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it?
The horse-hoofs ringing clear;
Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot; in the distance? Were
they deaf that they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over
the brow of the hill,

The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming!
She stood up straight and still!

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot,*
in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face
was like a light!

Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she
drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moon-
light,

Her musket shattered the moonlight,



Shattered her breast in the moonlight
and warned him—with her death.
He turned; he spurred to the West; he
did not know who stood

Bowed, with her head o'er the musket,
drenched with her own red blood!
Not till the dawn he heard it, his face
grew grey to hear

How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moon-
light, and died in the darkness there.

Back, he spurred like a madman, shriek-
ing a curse to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind
him and rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden
noon; wine-red was his velvet coat,
When they shot him down on the high-
way,

Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway,
with the bunch of lace at his throat.

And still of a winter's night, they say,
when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon
tossed upon cloudy seas,

When the road is a ribbon of moonlight
over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding —

Riding — riding —
A highwayman comes riding, up to the
old inn-door.

Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs
in the dark inn-yard;
He taps with his whip on the shutters,
but all is locked and barred;
He whistles a tune to the window, and
who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her
long black hair.

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A condensation of the novel in the author's own words

By George R. Stewart

Author of "Storm"

First Day

The Lookout turned off the broadcast. All she could get in the afternoon was one Reno station. Its program was not much at best, and during the last few minutes had been interrupted by an amazing variety of squawks and roars and crackles, as if a thunderstorm must be at work.

Just after she had flipped the switch, the telephone rang. She listened — long, short, short, short — her own signal. She answered:

"Cerro Gordo Lookout speaking."

"Hello, Judith." She recognized the deep, gruff voice of the Ranger.

"Oh, hello, Bart," she said. "Nice of you to call, I'm fine — how are the pups?"

She supposed that he had merely

called as he had before, to break the monotony of her life. Being alone for twenty-four hours a day generally, a lookout might be assumed to be lonely.

"Oh, the pups are O. K.," he said. "Say, there's a lightning-storm working up on us from the south. Hit the Sequoia Forest high country two days ago. We and the Plumas may be next. Don't sound too bad though. Just the same, I thought maybe a kid like you —"

"Look here now, Bart, you don't need —"

"Sorry! Sure, I beg pardon! I know you're twenty-one, but still that seems kind of young to me. Anyway, even Uncle Amos might get nervous if you perched him in a glass box on top of a sixty-foot steel tower, and a lightning-storm came playing around."

"O.K., if the flashes get within a mile, I pull my switch — it's all printed on this card tacked up here right by the phone. And then I stand on the

stool that has glass things on its feet."

"That's fine, honey. What's more, don't forget you're a lookout in the Ponderosa National Forest. If the lightning ain't quite knocking your front teeth in, swing your alidade on every strike you see, and get us a bearing. Write the time down too. That's all, and I've got to call some other lookouts."

On May 14th the gauges in the Ponderosa National Forest had last recorded rainfall. Now in September, the grass was ripe and brown; in the brushfields the manzanita leaves were half dormant, heavy with stored oil; among the trees a resinous odor hung above the carpet of dead pine-needles. As you crossed a meadow, your feet hit hard. Now the afternoons lay so hot and still, so dry, so charged with the emanations of gums and resins, that you might think the air itself would explode at the striking of a match.

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The thundercloud, again grown more intense, now moved above the Ponderosa Forest, and all five lookouts in the Suffolk and Barlow districts were watching it.

In the tower on Cerro Gordo the girl stood at her fire-finder. Her finely molded young face was eager and tense, with the suspense of the unknown. She felt a stirring in her hair.

"Electricity!" she thought. "No, maybe just being scared. Well, why not? Right here on the highest point in ten miles, on a steel tower sticking up into the air. I hope the lightning-rods are as good as Bart said they were!"

She thought of standing on the glass-footed stool, and decided not to — at least not until there had been one stroke.

As the cloud moved onward, the tension between it and the earth piled up to millions of volts. Invisible electrical streamers rose here and there from points of rock or tips of trees.

Suddenly, near the top of Cerro Gordo, the tension grew climactic, and a mile-long white stroke of lightning crackled between cloud and earth.

The flash half-blinded the girl; the thunderclap jarred her; the imminence of death turned her cold. Although the stroke was past, she was already scrambling to the stool when she heard the tree go crashing down. "No need to log a bearing on that one," she thought. "It's right here!"

Half a minute later, however, she was on the job again, and logged a stroke at 132, miles away toward Lovers Leap. Twice also she heard thunder without spotting the stroke.

Now, as if relieved by the lightning-strokes, the cloud looked less threatening. A shower, she saw, was falling far off to the east. As the minutes passed, she began to think that the storm would drift on without causing more trouble.

At that moment, however, the forward edge of the cloud, still highly charged, was approaching the ridge north of Onion Creek on the slope of Howell Mountain. This ridge was well covered by a fine forest, largely of Jeffrey pine. Part way up the slope stood a particular tree of that species. Even an experienced forester would not have noted it especially, except to say perhaps that it was remarkably vigorous and healthy.

The charge of electricity following beneath the cloud dipped into the canyon of Onion Creek, and then flowed up the other slope. . . . Then suddenly, in a blue-white flash there poured through the tree between cloud and earth, a force equal to that of many powerhouses. A long spiral weal rose from tip to root; pieces of bark were

blown out and fell through the air. Noises of rending and explosion smote the air.

While the pieces of bark were still falling, and before the sound of the thunder had reached her, the lookout on Cerro Gordo swung her alidade. She sighted through the wires as close to the exact point as she could remember, and read the azimuth as 65.

"About ten miles off, in round numbers; time is four-twelve," she thought, and started to write down the figures.

As the quiet of evening fell on the steep slope above Onion Creek, the pine tree was little changed. Nevertheless, at the base of the tree where the discharge had run along a buttress-root at the surface of the ground, the lightning-stroke had heated a few dry needles to kindling-point. A tiny column of smoke curled faintly into the air.

Second Day

In the hot morning sunshine the Supervisor of the Ponderosa National Forest waved good-bye to his wife and two small daughters, and walked along the main street of the little town of Suffolk toward Headquarters. His broad-brimmed hat kept the sun out of his eyes; his green uniform was clean and neat; he was as much at peace with the world as he could be . . .

His Ponderosa Forest straddled the crest of the Sierra Nevada, and sprawled over parts of three California counties. Officially the figure was 1,091,904 acres, and that worked out as 1706.1 square miles — an area, as he liked to put it to visitors: "Somewhat smaller than Delaware, but comfortably larger than Rhode Island."

. . . . About the Author

George R. Stewart's books give evidence of an independent and original mind. One of his earlier works, *Storm*, made the weather the hero of an exciting novel. *Man: An Autobiography* told the story of mankind, with man himself his own hero and narrator. Mr. Stewart was born in Sewickley, Pa., and studied at Princeton, the University of California, and Columbia. At present he is a professor of English at the University of California. To collect material for *Fire*, the author worked during two fire-seasons in close cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service in California. He served as a lookout, flew with parachutists, worked on fire lines and in many other ways amassed his knowledge of fire fighting.

The Supervisor turned to his phone, and said "Get me Arn, please." Then he heard his Dispatcher answering.

"Yes, Arn," he said. "What's the sum-up on that lightning storm yesterday?"

"Seven strokes is all we logged. . . . The one I don't like is over by Onion Creek on that ridge north of the creek."

The Supervisor thought a moment. "That's blind country in there, isn't it?" he asked.

"Well, technically, yes. But if the strike was anywhere near the top of the ridge, as it naturally would be, Cerro Gordo can just about see into it."

"You'll scout it by air anyway."

"As soon as I can."

On the ridge above Onion Creek, the fire had barely lived through the night. After sunrise the fire grew stronger. The warmed air began to rise, and since the trend of the canyon was toward the northeast, this new draft of air joined with and reinforced the prevailing southerly breeze.

Its chief vigor now centered at one end of a dry twig, half an inch thick; this twig was smoking vigorously. . . . It stretched out five inches into the unburned area.

As he walked along the corridor on the top floor of the Federal Building, Dave Halliday might again have passed for a civilian, if his gray Navy shirt and slightly rolling walk had not betrayed him.

Ahead, on the glass door, he saw: *Forecasting Division*. He flung open the door, and there was the Chief sitting at his desk.

"Hn-n?" said the Chief. "Just how long was it anyway? You went away a J.M. and a J.G., and here you are back a Lieutenant Commander, and — hn-n? — I guess we'll be paying you something more than that two thousand you started at."

"Well, what I'm interested in now is just where you're going to work me back into the Weather Bureau."

"Right here in San Francisco, if I have anything to say! But just now I have a temporary assignment for you. It won't be bad experience. Our station at Suffolk in the Ponderosa Forest is running short-handed. You would be in charge. You have to make the special forecasts about fire-danger. There's a lot of tricky little stuff to work on — local conditions, terrain, up-canyon winds. You'd better put out today."

During twenty years, from the summer after his thirtieth birthday, John Bartley had been the Ranger of Barlow

District. At first he had nursed ambitions to rise, some day, to be Supervisor of a Forest, but as years passed, he cared less and less, for the Barlow became his world. And Barlow District was big enough to keep a man from ever feeling cramped. . . .

In his office, Ranger Bartley heard the telephone ring in the outer office, and then the buzzer at his elbow.

"Bartley speaking," he said.

"Yes, Bart, this is — ah — Jones. Are you free tomorrow afternoon?"

"Why, I guess so. Yes, certainly, if you need me."

"I'd like to run up into the Basin with you. A lot of that timber up in there is getting pretty over-ripe, and there's a chance that we might do something with it."

Bart's jaw set suddenly. But the Supervisor was still speaking:

"There's a good mill-site at Idylhurst. The chief problem is that steep road up Strawberry Creek. . . ."

"You know," said Bart, really breaking in, "that's an awful pretty country up through there, some of the nicest mature forest in California."

The pause over the phone was long enough to let Bart know he had registered his point, but the Super did not argue.

"How about leaving around eleven, take lunches along?"

"Good enough. While we're at it, would you mind going all the way up to Cerro Gordo? I've got a green lookout there, and she may need some bucking up."

"We'll try to make it. That's the girl Judith Something-or-other — Spanish, isn't it?"

"That's her — Judith Godoy's the name — college kid, pretty good-looking. This one's no clinging vine, though — tall as I am, and got a square-set pair of shoulders would look good on a sergeant of marines."

As the receiver clicked down, Bart was out of his chair. There was a tightness in his throat. Twenty years now he had been Ranger of the Barlow. He knew it canyon by canyon, and ridge by ridge. He had climbed every peak, and fished every stream. "I love every tree of it," he said once to his wife.

And now this fellow Jones — the Super! Thinking up plans for a lumber mill — and in the Basin!

The girl on Cerro Gordo was getting into the swing of things now, and a very satisfying routine she found it, good for a troubled soul.

"Or at least, for her particular kind of troubled soul." She put the thought into actual words, but did not say them out loud, and she used the third per-

son as if she were writing a composition for English 41. "The solitude would certainly have driven some people insane, but she found herself flourishing. Perhaps her decision to become a lookout had been motivated by escape. But if so, the escape had been partly successful. Already she realized (no need to mention names) he was a heel, and not worth worrying about any more."

Third Day

Arnold Sorenson, the Dispatcher, put down the receiver, and leaned back in his chair to plan things. His blond hair and blue eyes showed Scandinavian blood — the son of one of those emigrants who had poured into the United States, and being woodsmen at home, had naturally headed for the great forests of the Northwest.

"Well," he thought, "we take off at three. Better check the location again, though."

He got up, and turned to the large map on the wall behind his desk. It was mounted on ply-wood, and from it protruded the glass heads of eleven large push-pins, each fitted into a hole at the location of one of the lookouts of the Ponderosa Forest. Around each of the holes and pins was a neatly stamped circle, graduated into its three-hundred-sixty degrees. The Dispatcher took the pin at Cerro Gordo, and as he pulled it out, a thread which was held taut by a hidden spring followed the pin. He placed the pin so that its thread lay precisely upon the line of the circle marking sixty-five degrees to the east of true north.

Next he took the Horse Mountain pin, and with similar care placed it so that the thread lay at 320. He thus had a theoretical "cross" on the location of the strike.

The "cross" was clearly somewhere on the ridge between Wilson Creek and Onion Creek. It was a dangerous place to have a fire start. The topography was bad, for at this season the prevailing south wind would sweep the flames up-hill. . . . The area was roadless area, too, although a good horse-trail led down the south side of Onion Creek.

The Dispatcher was suddenly aware of a young man standing hesitantly in the doorway of his office.

"Oh," said the Dispatcher, "pardon me for not noticing. I was thinking of something. Did you want me?"

"The girl out there told me to come in here, sir. I'm the new man to take over the weather station."

"Oh, yes," said the Dispatcher, extending his hand. Looks all right, he thought, about five-ten, slight, dark-brown hair and blue eyes, well enough set up, seems alert and reliable.

"I'm glad you're here, Dave," he went on. "They telegraphed me of course. We go by first names around here — mostly, at least. So call me 'Arn.' But I wasn't really expecting you before tomorrow."

The pilot was trying to speak over the noise of the engine.

"Want to buzz the lookout, Arn? I hear it's a girl now."

"O.K., Jim," said the Dispatcher.

The steep western slope of Cerro Gordo seemed to be rising up to crash against them.

"Look," said Jim, "she's got visitors."

"Oh, yes," he said, "that's the Supervisor. He said he might be coming up here. Better not try any buzzing when he's there."

"Right! Wouldn't hurt to fly kind of close, would it?"

"That Lookout's not bad," Jim was saying loudly, over the engine-noise. "How about giving me the telephone number for that one?"

"That's easy! *One long, three short.* Find her at home any time. Only remember, half the lookouts in the Forest will be listening in. . . ."

The Dispatcher looked for a smoke, or for any tree that might have been struck lately. No luck! "Might as well be heading for home," said the Dispatcher.

Fourth Day

The fire burned steadily and quietly. During the day it had eaten ahead some dozen feet through the duff, now and then blazing up as it ignited a cone or larger twig. Its front glowed in an unbroken though wavy line ten feet long. The fire grew stronger, as a war, beginning with some frontier incident, augments and spreads, and in the end engulfs great peoples.

Dave Halliday sat on a high stool at a high desk, worked at putting the last touches on his weather-map, and was happy. This was Thursday, and since he was out of touch with the weather, he checked back as far as Monday. A massive Pacific High dominated all the oceanic part of the map, and extended a long drooping nose into the continent, through British Columbia down into Montana. Northward of the high there was a weak storm in Alaska and another in Manitoba. Nearer home, California lay in a long trough of low pressure stretching up from the Mexican plateau. He looked closer, and saw thunderstorm-symbols recorded for some of the Sierra Nevada stations. That would be the work of some Gulf-of-Mexico air having its last fling.

The Tuesday and Wednesday maps showed no thunderstorms; otherwise, no significant change for the region of his special interest. That brought him to Thursday. It looked remarkably like Monday. But as he looked more carefully, he saw that there had perhaps really been a change. Monday had been a typical summer day; it might have been in July. But there was a touch of autumn about Thursday.

The new Alaskan storm was two hundred miles south of where the other center had been on Monday. That storm would bear watching, he decided. It might even be bringing in the rain that the people around here were waiting for.

Nevertheless, the summer weather would certainly hold for another day.



Judith Godoy . . her job was spotting

He tapped off a local forecast which could have been adequately enough expressed in the two words, "No change."

Fifth Day

Eating its way ahead through the duff, the fire was within a foot of a half-decayed tree-butt. The log grew so hot that it began to smoke. An hour later the butt of the log was nearly consumed. The whole middle portion of the log was now smoking vigorously.

"Slugger" O'Neill was a Fire-Crew Foreman in the Ponderosa. That season he had charge of five high-school boys, and they had been kept for most of the time, strategically, near Caribou Lakes. Their daily work was trail-clearance, but their chief reason for existence was to be an advance-crew for quick attack on any fire in that isolated region.

The boys were having a good time.

They had been sent to several small fires, and had enjoyed the excitement. They were either athletes or wanted to be, and constantly talked about how the steady work of clearing and rebuilding the trails put them into shape for the football season. They admired their thirty-year-old boss tremendously for his physical prowess . . .

Slugger's career in the professional ring still won him local homage. That career had actually been brief and not too glorious. But the boys loyally told each other that they bet Slugger could have been welterweight champion, "If he had really wanted to go ahead with it."

Barney Zulik, ex-Seabee, worked for the Larkin Lumber Company. Barney was a cat-skinner—an amazing profession, and a word of interesting etymology. First, in the old days of the frontier, there were bull-skinners. This term arose, by double hyperbole, to denote men who drove teams of oxen and were supposed to ply their long whips so constantly as to strip the skin off them. Later, as ox-teams vanished, the word became mule-skinner. Caterpillar-tractors took over, and by inevitable shortening came to be known as cats. Then, by analogy and complex humor, the operator of a caterpillar-tractor came to be a cat-skinner.

Some say that all cat-skinners are maniacs.

Bo Fox, in the language spoken along Second Street in Sacramento, was a "wino." Bo Fox, in the language spoken by the Forest Service, was a "pogy," a word denoting a casual unskilled laborer, of the kind recruited in large numbers to fight fires. Like his name, Bo Fox was small and insignificant.

Walking down Second Street, Bo stopped from habit in front of the Federal Employment Agency, and looked at the bulletins. Various possible jobs were posted, but he had paid in advance for another night at his flop-house and still had a little money in his pocket.

Sixth Day

The butt of the log was a little mound of gray ashes. The middle of the log was also consumed, but its tip still burned quietly in the calm darkness of the early morning. The fire had now advanced ten feet beyond the log, and burned on a front of thirty feet.

Now along its upper edge the fire approached a clump of young trees, and the needles beneath a seedling began to glow. As the fire began to burn right beneath, the gums and resins

vaporized. Mingling with the air, this vapor formed an almost explosive mixture. Suddenly the mixture ignited, and a bright pyramid of flame rose to a height of two feet.

By the aid of this sudden and intense flare-up the point of the fire had in a few seconds stepped forward another foot. Now it pressed upon a thicket of young trees, and flames began to shoot higher, crackling in the interlaced dry branches. In another minute the needles ignited, and the whole clump roared upward.

"Five-thirty? Do you think it's five-thirty?" Judith Godoy, still healthily sleepy, got an eye open, and from her tangle of blankets peered around the lookout. It was light enough now to look around and see something.

There, far to the northeast over Reverse Ridge, rose a hazy, pillar-like smudge that had never been there before.

She ran for the catwalk. Through the binoculars the smudge jumped closer. Looked like smoke, all right!

She raced back, swung the alidade, lined up the crosshair through the peep-hole, and read the azimuth. Six-six-point-five! That settled it! Only one-point-five off where she had spotted the lightning-stroke.

Bart jerked off the receiver, and spoke sharply. "Hello. Barlow Station. Ranger Bartley speaking."

"Bart, I got a smoke! This is Cerro Gordo speaking. I mean. I got a SMOKE at SIX-SIX-POINT-FIVE!"

"All right—that's fine! Now, not too excited, Judith. Wait till I write that down. Six . . . six . . . point . . . five. And the time is 5:31."

"That's right!"

"That lightning-stroke, you think?"

"Just a point and a half off where I had it spotted."

In the control-room Bart flipped the radio-switch. He spoke into the microphone: "Z-17 calling Z-142 . . . Z-17 calling Z-142. . . . Come in, Z-142 . . . Come in, Z-142." He paused, hoping. And then Slugger O'Neill spoke to him across twenty-five miles of canyons and ridges:

"Z-142 to Z-17 . . . Z-142 to Z-17 . . . Go ahead, Z-17. . . . Go ahead, Z-17."

Bart dropped the formality: "Say, Slugger, this is Bart. We've got a smoke somewhere over by Onion Creek. You're the nearest crew."

"I get yuh, Bart."

The youngsters were yelping around him: "What's up, Slugger? . . . Who was it? . . . We got a fire?" They quieted as he straightened up.

"Come on, you guys! We're alerted!"

The theory of fighting a forest-fire is simple. You merely confine it within a fire-line, and let it burn itself out. An ordinary fire-line is a foot or two wide. From it all duff must be scraped away, so that the creeping ground-fire will die for lack of fuel. All low overhanging branches must be cleared out. The high branches of mature trees are ignored, in the hope that they will not catch fire. If they do, the result is the cataclysm known as a crown-fire, in which flames tower up high above the highest trees, and pass from one treetop to the next in complete disregard of fire-lines. Since heat, unless driven by a strong wind, rises sharply upward, the amount of conflagration short of a crown-fire that a narrow fire-line can stop is often little short of seeming miraculous.

Theoretically Slugger O'Neill had hit the fire at 6:23 with a crew of six. Actually, one of them had bumped his knee, and was not yet up the hill. Also, Slugger himself went off, as was right and proper, to scout the fire, taking with him the ax.

Therefore, four men with three shovels and a McLeod began to build line. All four were winded and tired from Slugger's pace-making.

Immediately also the problem of tools arose. "One ax, three shovels, two McLeods," Slugger had ordered, but shovels were not adapted to work on the rocky canyon-side. The McLeod—a foot-wide heavy hoe on one side, a kind of broad-toothed rake on the other—was just the thing for scraping away the duff until the unburnable raw earth showed through.

The McLeod-man worked rapidly uphill clearing a narrow "dink-line" which would at least check the fire, and might be widened later.

By a quarter of seven Bart had eaten breakfast, and dressed, and been back in the office long enough to be feeling nervous. Bart decided to call the Dispatcher at Suffolk.

The Dispatcher was feeling optimistic and even jovial. "Hello, Bart," he said into the phone. "I hear you have a little trouble on your hands."

"Wish I knew if it really was little. Slugger don't report back. I wouldn't worry except that it's a tough place to get reinforcements into."

The Dispatcher dropped his easygoing mood. "I'll order up the plane and take a look in there myself. Ought to be able to make it—let's see—by ten o'clock. Should I alert the paratroopers—any place to jump up there?"

"Gosh, I don't know. There're a couple of bare spots along the ridge, but I hate to ask anybody to jump into them."

"I'll alert them anyway . . ."

When he had arrived at the fire, Slugger had known nothing about the distant storm. He had acted in accordance with his own character, attacking straight on, at the point of danger.

Even while the boys were at work, however, conditions were changing. The heat of the now high sun began to establish an up-draft in the canyon, and the approach of the storm-front reinforced this southerly breeze.

First came a little puff, and then a long sigh. The tufts of flame wavered and spiraled, and then leaned over backward and stayed that way.

The boys looked at one another quickly. For a moment, it seemed as if the wind were aiding them, blowing the flames back upon the burned area. Then they remembered the other side of the fire.

Instantly, what had been the front of the fire had become its flank or rear. The wind no longer blew the heat toward the line which the boys had so laboriously cut through. Instead of advancing diagonally up-hill in a down-canyon direction, the fire shifted front and took off up-canyon.

The boys for the first time felt a quick anxiety, almost a fear.

"She's outsmarted us!" said one of them. He was no poet, but quite naturally he personified the fire and attributed to it a malignant intelligence.

Bart called the Dispatcher again:

"Say, Arn, I'm starting in. Haven't heard from Slugger, but Judith up there at Cerro Gordo says the smoke is definitely building up."

Bart pulled in at the Guard Station. Tony already had Betty saddled, and they took only a minute to get the neat-footed mare into the horse-trailer.

Bart saw the plane circle over the top of the fire. Then it came flying right down the canyon out of the smoke, and he heard Arn's voice.

"Not too good, not too bad. Slugger's there all right. . . . She's got two hundred yards open front, with two long stringers out ahead. She covers ten acres maybe. I'm going to send in the jumpers."

There was no door on this plane in the place where a door ought to be, and the Supervisor did not like it. He sat opposite where a door should be, and held on to a bar behind him with

both hands. The Negro lieutenant talking to the Negro sergeant was standing nonchalantly close to the open space, holding with only one hand. . . .

The plane bumped sharply, and the Supervisor looked at the ten men who were soon to jump. . . . They were in their jumping-outfits with only their face-masks yet to adjust. They were padded like super-football players, and looked, he thought tritely, like men from Mars. Each had a coil of rope dangling from his belt. They sat silent.

Just beyond the fire the Supervisor saw the thin spot in the trees.

He nudged the lieutenant with his free hand, pointed. . . .

"That's no bigger than a barn-roof and just about as steep!" said the lieutenant sharply. And then, suddenly military, the lieutenant snapped out, "Sergeant, take charge of the jumping."

"Yes, sir."

"Make it three-three-four," said the lieutenant cryptically, and then walked up to the pilot's compartment, to direct the pilot and give the signal for jumping.

The plane had flown past the bare spot, but now it began to circle back. "Come on, first three," ordered the sergeant.

Three of the jumpers stood up, including a corporal. Each snapped a clip onto a convenient steel-cable. They shifted their chutes nervously. Their face-masks were in place now.

The plane quit circling and straightened out. The three jumpers moved up closer. The sergeant looked out tensely. Suddenly a buzzing bell sounded.

"Ho!" shouted the sergeant, and the three men went out so closely together that they all seemed one. . . .

Watching the next three jump was not so bad. Four men went out on the third run, and then they circled twice more, as the sergeant and the only remaining private pushed out bundles of tools and food and bedding attached to yellow parachutes.

The forecast was a difficult one. After he had typed it and left his assistant radioing it out, Dave Halliday walked over to the Dispatcher's office. Arn was there.

"How's your fire?" Dave asked.

"Had a message through from Bart half an hour ago. He's got twenty-three men there now. Expects to get his line all tied in before so long, in time to get his backfires going before the main fire gets there. Then we figure that rain you're sending us will get here to make the mop-up easy. You're not renegeing on the rain, are you?"

"No-o-o."

"You sound doubtful."

"Well, there ought to be some rain all right, but I'm wondering about tomorrow. I couldn't make a clean forecast. I'd like to talk to you about it."

"Go ahead."

"You see, I figure the pressure in eastern Oregon is the thing to watch. If we get a high in there, it'll mean we have a big dome of cold air lying over the plateau."

"What of it?"

"Well, cold air runs down hill, and if a lot of it piles up in eastern Oregon, it's going to start sluicing down through these canyons until it fills the Central Valley of California like a bath-tub. And then—"

"O.K.—Don't go on!" said Arn, "I know about it from here in. We used to call it a Santa Ana on the Angeles, and a Mono on the Stanislaus. Up here it's not quite so hot, and that's about all. Just our luck to have a fire already going when she hits."

"Well, maybe she won't. Can't tell for sure yet!"

"She probably will, all right. It's the right time of year. Our chance is to get this Spitcat Fire out, before the wind hits."

... Bart judged that this was the moment.

There was a gap of two hundred yards to link up. Bart scrambled up the slope with the corporal, pointing out where the line could be put through most efficiently. Then he sent the corporal back, and went on to meet the suppression-crew, knowing that he would have to build his back-fires from the ridge down.

When the suppression-crew had cleared fifty yards, Bart pulled a fusee out of his pocket. He held a match to the end, and the fusee flared with a bright pink flame. He stuck it among the twigs of a dead branch that lay four feet inside the fire-line. When the twigs blazed, he pulled the fusee out, and went along inside the line starting fires in the needles and twigs. "Fight fire with fire."

With the wind as it was, all the little fires blew toward the line, but moving only a few feet they had no chance to get big, and when they came to the cleared line they died. But on the other side, eating backward into the wind, the back-fires moved slowly. Then as the main fire grew closer, the back-fires caught the suck of the draft which the main fire pulled in toward itself against the light wind.

Suddenly the back-fires sprang to life, and went roaring through the un-

derbrush toward the main fire. The two met about a hundred feet from where Bart was standing at the line. As in the head-on dash of two waves, the fires piled up. . . .

Then, so suddenly as to seem queer, everything was quiet. Also everything was dark, for as they had worked, twilight had crept up, and now that the big blaze had died down, there was little light left.

Seventh Day

After midnight an old moon was high enough above the shoulder of Howell Mountain to cast some brightness among the trees.

You would have said at first glance that the fire was really dead, but as you looked closer, here was a little glow,



John Bartley . . . he loved every tree

and there a tiny flame, and since you saw dozens of such points, you knew that there would be thousands of them within the area enclosed by the fire-line.

That morning, across hundreds of miles of inland plateau, though it was only September, frost was glittering on the sage-brush. The air, cold and dry already when it had moved in behind the storm-front, had grown colder during the clear night. This dome of cold and heavy air, extending upward some thousands of feet, rested upon a plateau which was several thousand feet above sea-level, in eastern Oregon and the adjoining parts of Idaho and Nevada.

Only a few hundred miles to the southwest, in the low-lying Central Valley of California, the temperature had reached a hundred degrees in the afternoon, and had scarcely fallen below eighty during the night. The air was correspondingly light, and it rested on a surface only a little above sea-level. Lacking a barrier, the heavier air must

by the mere law of gravity, run down and replace the lighter air. Before daylight a dry cold wind was beginning to pour through the passes.

At last it came. A gigantic wave of air billowed and broke along the slope of the ridge. From the slope of Howell Mountain another surging wave raced downward. The two met on the ridge in a great swirl.

The tree-tops bent suddenly like grass. In the power of the blast the flames at the tops of burning snags stood out stiff like flags. The quick wrench of the whirling air tore off bits of bark and rotten wood, swirled them upward for a moment, and then tossed and hurled them off.

Some cooled as they fell; some lit within the fire-line; but others blew across the line and fell flaming upon the tinder-dry needles. Fire took off from each fallen spark.

Suddenly it was wide-open disaster . . . Bart, running down the line, saw that the game was up.

"Get back out of there, boys!" he screamed. "Get back out of there! Head for the old burn!"

Some of them heard, and a white-faced youngster burst out of the underbrush, slapping at a spark on his sleeve. "One!" counted Bart. "Two-three-four-five. There's Slugger—six!" But there were still others somewhere in the already burning scramble of underbrush and trees.

Bart heard one of the boys cry out sharply in panic, "We're goin' to burn here! I'm goin' 'run for it!"

Turning, Bart struck him with the open hand, full force on the cheek.

"Shut up!" he said. "I've been in these woods twenty years, and I don't want to die any more than you do! Stay with me!"

They went on. They had to slap out burning spots in their clothes, and their shoes were hot. But they were inside a little island of already burned ground. It was pitifully small-looking and they were certain to get extremely hot, maybe worse.

On Cerro Gordo that morning she stayed mostly inside the room. The wind seemed to shake the whole tower.

There was only the faintest wisp of smoke over beyond Reverse Ridge. Then she just glanced in the other direction for a second—so it seemed, at least—and when she looked back, a great black column was towering up. She ran for the telephone.

"Hello, Arn?" she said. "Say, the Spitcat has blown up. There's a big column of smoke, rising fast."

After he got the news, Arnold Sorenson, the Dispatcher, called to his assistant in the next room. "That Spitcat Fire has taken off! Call our rangers, and tell them to give us all they got. Fire-camp at Onion Flat."

What yesterday had been a frontier-incident was now a total war.

The fire was blazing on both sides of the little burned area. The six of them lay close together. One was hysterical, and the others had to hold him so that he wouldn't jump up and run, as he had tried once.

So far, so good! Bart was thinking that he had been in as bad a hole as this a couple of times before.

Someone started "Our Father . . ." in a quiet voice, and then someone else began with "Hail, Mary . . ."

Since the blow-up, the Spitcat had already run half a mile down the ridge, and thrown out spot-fires even farther. The first rush of the wind had raced it along the ground, driving the heat low before it. But now the great mass of super-heated air rose upward. A small tree flamed, and then with a deep hiss a two-hundred-foot pine rose in a solid column of flame that towered a hundred feet higher.

The heat had been too much for the next tree. It too towered into flame, and from it the fire spread onward to the interlocked branches of two others.

And now with a kind of slow majesty, the crown-fire moved down the ridge, leaping from tree-top to tree-top.

Lying there close to the ground beneath the worst of the smoke, Bart heard the long hiss and roar that meant a crown-fire. He raised his head a little, trying to locate the sound. There was all the difference between life and death, depending upon whether the fire had crowned to windward of them, or farther down the ridge. He was fairly sure it was down-ridge, and at the same moment a breath of fresh and cooler air, clean of smoke, low along the ground, swept across his face. And then, suddenly, he knew.

All at once he ceased being a man saving his life or even a crew-boss saving his men's lives. He was Ranger of Barlow District, and he was fire-boss of a fire that had gone rampaging.

"I'm going out!" he said. "You can come with me or stay here—there's no more danger!"

As he thought they would, they all followed him.

By now, half the lookouts in the Plumas and Tahoe Forests could see

the Spitcat smoke. From a hundred miles westward, lookouts in the Mendocino saw it rising above the haze that filled the Sacramento Valley. It towered to twenty thousand feet.

On the skid-rows of Stockton and Reno, as well as in Sacramento, the loud-speakers were blaring, "MEN WANTED TO FIGHT FOREST-FIRE! . . ."

At Camp Far West many of the men were away on Sunday passes, but the sergeants swept the barracks of the unlucky ones.

"Turn out, you guys! There's a fire! . . ."

The camp-truck rolled to a stop and the camp-boss jumped off and looked the place over. It was a good spot for a camp at the point where Bacchus Creek came into Onion Creek. The camp-boss mapped the lay-out in his head—*Parking* on both sides of the road as it came into the south end of the flat along Onion Creek, *Time-keeper* next, and then *Supply* at the turn-around. *Communications*, *First Aid*, and *Headquarters* opposite *Supply* between the road and Onion Creek, *Kitchen* in the angle of the angle of the creeks with room enough around it for men to sit and eat, *Sleeping Grounds* out of the way over by Bacchus Creek, and *Latrine* up on the first slope of the hill.

Another truck with supplies and five more of the camp-crew pulled in behind the first one.

"All right, boys," barked the camp-boss, "get 'em unloaded."

On Second Street in Sacramento the loud-speaker was still blaring: MEN TO FIGHT FOREST-FIRE! Bo Fox, the insignificant man who disliked a closed door behind him, followed the drift. He was out of a job and nearly broke. . . .

Barney Zulik, the cat-skinner, was at a beer-parlor in Polkville when a foreman came looking for him.

"There's a fire up in the Basin, Barney. They need you in there with your cat."

"Ain't it my day off?"

But the foreman knew the next move.

"Say, Barney," he said, "the guys that run those Forest-Service cats can't cut bacon up in the woods. They need a real cat-skinner in there!"

Bart organized it as a three-division fire. Division I was the north flank, the Wilson Creek side; Division II was the south flank, the Onion Creek side;

Division III was the front. Bart picked an Angeles man as Division-Boss for I, and a Trinity man for II, but for III he picked Ben Roach, who was his friend, and an old fire-fighter.

The Division-Bosses were assigned their Sector-Bosses, and the Sector-Bosses their Crew-Bosses, and the Crew-Bosses got the names of the dozen men who formed their crew.

Eighth Day

The simpler peoples have no doubts; the fire, for them, is living. The old words linger, and make us half believe. We *feed* and *tend* a fire, as if it were horse or child. It *eats*, *devours*, *runs*, *spits*, and *roars*. It lies as a sleeper, springs to life, and dies. Its dwelling-place, the hearth, stands for man's dwelling-place, the home. And *ashen pale* is the color of coming death.

Quench once meant both to put out a blaze, and to kill a man; *kindle*, to light a fire and to give birth to young. And even yet, as spelling shows, our *kin* and our own *kind* are those kindled from the same ancestral fire.

After midnight the three of them got together at Headquarters—Bart, the Supervisor, and Walt Burnaby, trouble-shooter from the Regional Office.

The problem, essentially, was simple. The crews of Division III must close a mile-and-half gap and get the back-fires going before the main fire reached the line. But beyond that, the problem grew more and more complex, as factors of time and wind and cover and human fallibility appeared.

The Super was checking the aerial photographs. "Better than half is through brush—thick manzanita," he concluded.

"Not much more!" Bart snapped, and then he noticed, with a faint irritation, that the Super was doing a multiplication problem on a sheet of paper. . . . Line through manzanita is much slower and has to be built eight feet wide.

The Supervisor straightened out his long body from where it was bent over the desk, and came up with an answer.

"The mathematics says we're all right, but I'd like a bigger safety-factor." He paused a moment. "Bart, you might give her a little more room. All that would burn would be the brush-field, and it's no use anyway."

"You know, Super, that brush-field is old, and the young firs are poking right up through it. Give us ten-twenty years, and the brush will be dying out. Burn her now, and she'll come up solid manzanita again. . . . You know, we got to decide *something*."

For another moment the Supervisor



To the Super . . . trees meant lumber

thought of all that might go wrong — a leaking oil-line on a cat, the carelessness of a Sector-Boss. Bart took the transmitter and glanced up for a word or a sign. The Supervisor remembered suddenly the story of some general who kept silence and refused to confirm or to countermand a charge. Bart began talking into the transmitter.

Right where the nose of the ridge began to fall away, the cat-skinners got their first good view of the fire. The Forest-Service cat-skinner said they were about two miles from the nearest point of the fire-line, and he figured they could make it by daybreak.

"Let me take the lead," said Barney. "I'll get us there before that!"

"Take it over then. It's no treat for me!" . . .

They went a little faster. There was a steep open place, and for a hundred feet ahead Barney's lights showed up nothing but a smooth expanse of brush. He gave her the gun, and the big cat, its blade raised high, crunched down the slope. Then suddenly its treads ran out along the tops of the bushes, and as the cat tipped forward the treads had nothing but bushes beneath them. Barney jumped and went flying through the air. The cat dropped on its blade, toppled, went upside down. Then, the whole thrust of its momentum driving it downward, it turned again — lazily as a rolling elephant — and came to rest upright.

They rushed to pick up Barney's body . . . He was not even limping. The cat, being at least as tough as Barney, was probably not much injured either. But the control levers were bent beyond using and hopelessly jammed.

When they examined the place, they found there was a six-foot sheer drop-off. It was a natural tank-trap.

The old moon was high when Ben Roach made a hurried inspection . . . The unfinished gap was less than two hundred yards now, and the men of each crew could look ahead and see the bobbing headlights of the other crew. But off to one side the fire was not so far away as the distance to the other crew.

"Listen!" yelled one of the men. As the clump of axes and the scrape of McLeods ceased, they heard the crackle of fire and the sigh of wind, but cutting across those sounds, from off to the north, came the muttering roar of a big Diesel engine.

A little cheer went up. "There she is! . . . About time! . . . That's sure a cat!"

One of them spoke the thoughts they had not dared express:

"Say, it's lucky she got here. We'd never have closed this gap in time."

In one spot the fire was only twenty feet off. It was now or never, and behind the cat came Ben Roach with a lighted fusee. By good luck the back-fire caught quickly, and roared up to meet the advancing point.

The heat of the first back-fire died down. No sparks had jumped the line, but the line itself had been too hastily cleared and a point of fire had worked across it to the other side. The heat was still furnace-like, but two men rushed in, caught the point of fire, and threw it back across the line. As they came running out, Ben Roach lit the next stretch of back-fire, and on the other side his Sector-Boss did the same.

Ben Roach had fought many fires, and he knew that this was a tough spot. Blazing fusee in hand, he retreated step by step. With luck it might hold, but the cat had got there a little too late, and there had been only one cat. The sun was up now, and that meant that the wind would blow a little harder. His last back-fire blazed up, and he stepped off to get away from the heat.

Then suddenly came the long whoop from behind.

He swung around. "Beat it, boys!" he yelled. He ran. . . . He came through to the Sector-boss and a few men on the other side.

All the Sector-boss said was: "Well, Ben, I see you made it."

"Yes," he said, "I made it, but . . . the line's all gone. Get on your radio, and tell 'em to pull out before they run into trouble."

"It's tough. If both the cats had got here, we'd of held her. . . ."

Yes, it was a day of disaster, and of retreat. The three of them held another council of war, but it did not take long this time.

"I played it too close up," said Bart.

"You'd have been all right," said Walt Burnaby, "except for that crazy cat-skinner."

"There wasn't enough safety-margin," said Bart.

"We know that now, Bart," said the Supervisor, "but nobody can tell for sure in advance."

There was no argument about where the line should go this time. They all agreed that the top of Reverse Ridge was the place. . . .

From a three-division fire, they reorganized it as a two-zone fire, with five divisions.

Dave Halliday told Arn the forecast and said he'd like to go and have a look at the fire closer up.

"Sure," said Arn. "Cerro Gordo Lookout would be the best place. I'd take the jeep."

"Thanks," said Dave. "The lookout won't mind, will he? Is he a good guy?"

"Oh — yes —" said Arn, in a funny way. "I forgot you were so new to the Forest. No, the lookout won't mind, I imagine. I shouldn't be surprised if you two would hit it off pretty well." And then, although Dave could not imagine why, he added the curious comment, "You know, Dave, you're quite a handsome fellow!"

She heard a motor puttering somewhere on the tree-covered slope below her. Peering through the glass, she saw a bright red jeep come right up the slope. There was only the driver in it. He was not wearing a Forest-Service uniform, but he did not look like a rough-neck either. The gray pants looked like the Navy, and the open-necked plaid shirt gave him a collegiate touch.

Instead of calling up to ask permission, he just started to climb the steel stairs, and she could hear him whistling softly. . . .

"Come on up," she said. "I'm Judith Godoy, the lookout."

"O-o-h," he said in a long-drawn exclamation, "I beg your pardon! Arn Sorenson didn't tell me there was a girl here. I've just come to Suffolk, and I thought lookouts were men."

"I see."

"I'm awful sorry. All Arn said was he thought the lookout and I might get along pretty well."

"Oh, that's it! That's what passes for a good joke in this part of the country. — Well, come on up, and have a look at my fire."

But when he came up, she was pleasantly conscious that he was not looking altogether at the fire.

The place was not a hundred feet from the trail; yet few people had ever seen it. Bart never passed along this trail without stepping aside to look at what he merely called The Glen.

Without thinking, Bart took off his hat. Moving carefully among the azaleas so as to break no branches, he went forward to a tiny pool, and knelt by it. The little rainbow trout darted away, as he leaned over to drink.

As he rose again, he stood and gazed around. He breathed deeply. Profound feelings surged within him, inexpressible longings for beauty, and vague hope that all things might live together in love.

He had scarcely been gone a minute. As if with faith renewed, he came back to the trail, swung into the saddle, and started on.

The Super went to the chow-line late that evening. . . . Yes, it looked fairly good, barring accident. Bart — well, Bart knew a lot about fire. If he just didn't get so sentimental about trees! As soon as you began thinking from somewhere inside your stomach and guts instead of from your head, you made mistakes.

Why be sentimental about a tree? It was just a lot of lath, and siding, and two-by-fours, that still happened to have roots on one end and needles on the other. If a lumber-yard burned, you figured the loss in dollars and cents, but you didn't weep tears.

Ninth Day

Bo had steadily grown more apprehensive. In the last half hour he had heard various men speak of the trail as being the only way up through the line of the cliff, and he did not realize that this report, now coming back to him as if official, had really originated in his own mind. The idea was thus firmly fixed and the farther he walked eastward the more he felt himself walking into a trap. If the fire burned across the trail anywhere behind, it would be like a door clicking and he would be caught. . . .

At the other end of their line the men of the crew mingled with those of another crew who were based on the Onion Creek camp. These men had actually come up through another break in the cliff. Hearing the casual talk

about only one way up, they did not compare notes; in their general unfamiliarity with the country, they assumed that the one way was that by which they themselves had ascended.

Once the rumor had made the jump, it ran along the ridge eastward, and men of those crews also began to look nervously backward for the one way by which they must escape.

By now there were about sixteen hundred men on the fire, and more coming. At the work of transportation there were more than a hundred trucks, buses and cars, three packtrains, and a cargo-plane. Twelve cats were on the lines, and three tankers were ready to go into action if ever the fire got where they could reach it. A scout-plane was on call.

To Ben Roach's practiced eye, the



Dave . . . his job was the weather

fire was already changing. The ridge was fairly level on top, and once the fire reached leveler ground, it lost that part of its vigor which sprang from the up-slope and the funnel-effect of the canyons. . . . The crown-fire would almost certainly puff out, once it passed the edge of the thickly growing Douglas firs.

He checked with his Sector-bosses to make sure that they had plenty of fuses handy, and understood the tactics. He called Cerro Gordo: "Keep looking. The next half hour will be it!"

He called Bart.

Judith Godoy and Dave Halliday leaned against the railing on the east catwalk. She was wearing khaki trousers and her dark-green Juan's shirt. The yellow handkerchief around her hair was more for work than looks today; it was already sandy with ashes. . . .

"I'm just a Greek chorus," she said. "What's that? I'm just a meteorologist."

"I mean, I see everything that happens on the stage and make comments, but I just stay put and don't take part in the action."

"Your comments affect what other people do. — Well, what about me? I keep looking at that storm on my map, and making comments on it, but I can't make the storm bring us rain to douse the fire."

"You heard him. He said the next half-hour was it."

"There's another bit of ash," he said, and started to wipe it off her hand. But in some way or other it seemed more natural just to let his hand stay on top of hers.

A back-fire is a powerful weapon, but two-edged.

A large fire sucks air in toward itself from all directions. Thus at a certain distance ahead of itself the fire neutralizes the wind, and at an even closer distance reverses the wind. The back-fires were thus to be lighted at the moment when this reversed current of air became effective.

Watching from his rock ledge, Ben Roach felt the wind fall off to a lull, and then slide gently against his other cheek.

At the same moment, the Sector-boss in the stretch below him lit his fuse. . . .

By now the back-fires were roaring off and forming a solid front, twenty feet high. In a few minutes they would meet the main fire in a sudden dashing up of flame, and the worst would be over.

To Ben Roach looking from the rock-ledge the back-fires roared off magnificently. To Bo Fox, half a mile down the line, the back-fires crackled too close to his ears. The line seemed pitifully narrow and ineffective. He did not realize that the flames were actually moving away from it.

The reversed air-current was only close to the ground, and once sparks had been whirled upward, the prevailing wind blew some of them back across the line. A wisp of smoke curled up, but two men sprang to take care of it.

Bo glanced behind him, and at that moment a little bush on the wrong side of the line flared up. He felt the click of the door behind him, and with the high-pitched scream of a terrified animal, he dropped his shovel and ran.

The crew-boss saw him and shouted, and then ran to stop him. . . .

Crew after crew looked up as they heard the babble of frightened men.

The panic-infected them, and they too began to run.

The little blaze which had startled Box Fox merely burned itself out against the rock. But a long stretch of line was left empty. As the meeting of the fires threw up high stabbing spirals of flame, the upper wind caught sparks and swirled them across the line. Here and there, as was only to be expected, wisps of smoke curled up. In the dry wind the little fires built up rapidly, and raced ahead.

Bart turned to the map. He drew the point of a finger along a line a little up the slope from Curran Creek. "We'll put a new line along there."

"Say, Bart," said Walt Burnaby, "that's playing it pretty close up, isn't it?"

"Maybe, but there's some awful pretty country we got to save in there—that glen along Curran Creek. We can hold that line. We got to believe we can do it!"

Bart knew that they were looking at each other, and that one of them was probably making that little movement of the head which means to step aside somewhere and talk this over.

"It can't be done," said Walt Burnaby.

"That's right," said the Super. He was holding the piece of paper in his hand. It was full of figures—manpower and transportation and line-building, against distance and rate of spread. The fire won. . . .

The Super came back to Headquarters. "Say, Bart," he began, "you've had a pretty rough time here. You're getting pretty tired, I guess—"

He paused.

"Yeah—" said Bart, not helping him out.

"You see, Walt and I have been talking. We think maybe you better—don't you think it would be a good idea?—If you took some time and got rested up?—"

He paused again, and the sweat flowed.

"You mean," said Bart in a level voice, "you mean you're throwing me out of being Fire-boss?"

"Well, Bart, you've had a tough time—"

Suddenly he saw Bart's eyes blaze; at least he was going down fighting.

"Super, you got to give that to me in writing!"

"All right, Bart, if you want it the hard way."

And yet it seemed really the easier

way. This at least was a man taking it, not a wounded animal.

Bart folded the paper once. Then he turned and walked away.

Tenth Day

Reading the emergency weather forecast, the Supervisor was pleased with its honesty. The fellow as much as said he didn't know. As far as the Supervisor, acting as Fire-boss, was concerned, that made everything easy. He merely had to prepare for the worst.

His strategy was working, and with any luck he had the fire in a pocket. Now it burned only in the canyon, well confined between two sharp ridges. All he had to do now was to flank it along the ridges, and finally meet its onset along the flattish and rocky and thinly forested top of Cerro Gordo. That meant letting two or three square miles of good forest go up in smoke, but he had taken the responsibility for the sacrifice, and it was the safest plan. That afternoon should tell the story.

Dave Halliday wondered if he shouldn't jump into the red jeep and start for Cerro Gordo. That was a wonderful place for watching wind-currents. (But the wind-currents were, in some way, not drifting smoke giganticly across canyons or swaying tree-tops, but were causing little ripples in wisps of brown hair that stuck out from under a yellow handkerchief.)

"I'm starting for Cerro Gordo," he called to his assistant. "Call me if anything important comes in on the telephone."

"They'll be abandoning Cerro Gordo pretty soon now," said the assistant. "The new fire-line runs right underneath it. Things will be getting hot there."

Dave felt a sudden alarm which had nothing to do with air-currents.

Suddenly on the tower everything was almost quiet. She was conscious of a new sound filling the air. It was low and sinister and all-enveloping—the hiss and crackle of flames.

Maybe I'd better be getting out of here, she thought. Even inside the glass-walled room, she felt hot. Thick smoke drifted close overhead now.

Looking downward, she saw beneath the smoke along the line. Men were lighting fuses now. They ran along, setting fires inside the line. She watched in fascination, except once when the drifting smoke enveloped the whole tower. She shut the door quickly, for at the moment more smoke than fresh air came in.

When Dave came around the last

turn and up to the crest, he was suddenly face to face with the magnificent show. The back-fire had met the main fire, and everything was going up in high and solid masses of flame. As he looked at the tower, he saw the smoke drifting thickly all about it, and then through the glass he just had a glimpse of a yellow handkerchief bobbing about.

"The little fool!" was his first thought. "Why didn't she get out when the getting was good?"

Staggering, feeling himself close to going out, Dave made the catwalk, flung open the door, stepped in, and closed it behind to keep out the smoke.

He was just ready to drop to the floor, but the air inside was better, and his head cleared.

"You—little—fool!" was all he could think to gasp, and then it seemed the most natural thing in the world that she was sobbing against his shoulder and he had his arms around her and was patting her back. . . . A wedge of glass clattered to the floor. Smoke poured in through the gap.

"Come on!" he said and pulled her toward the door. "Take a deep breath and hold it!"

He had his arm around her, and knew she was holding her breath. The first flight down was easy, running. Halfway down the second it was getting hard, and then he felt the wind-shift. The air was suddenly good.

"Relax!" he said, and he loosened his grip, though he still kept his arm where it was. "No hurry. You see that wind-shift was toward the south, and when it shifts that way with a front coming in like it is now, why, it's not likely to shift back."

"This," she said with a happy little smile, "is the funniest time and place I ever heard of for a lecture on meteorology."

Crossword Puzzle Answer

Yes, we know it's upside down, but don't peek now.

	A	N		N	E	
S	R	O	S	I	O	V
Y	R	I	E	F	I	E
O	P	O	E	R	A	P
T	O	F	T	E	N	E
	D		R	I	D	
S	E	J	E	D	A	P
T	O	G	I	L	E	A
E	C	E	N	I	A	L
S	S	A	W	I	R	E
	S	W				T

And then he knew that he was blushing.

The Supervisor climbed to the top of the boulder, and looked back and forth along the length of critical line. Everywhere the fire had died down, and he saw men standing idle and looking at it.

He let out a long breath, and then breathed easily. From his pocket he drew his note-book. He glanced at his watch. Then he wrote firmly:

"2:52 p.m. Fire under control."

At Suffolk, his work finished, Dave Halliday slept soundly. . . . In the dark of early morning the rain began — a drifting mist at first, and then a steady drizzle.

At Headquarters the Maps-and-Records man, with lugubrious satisfaction, summed up the fire for the last time — or at least, he hoped. He wrote down the figures at 10,032 acres, almost sixteen square miles.

The costs of suppression alone would run well over a hundred thousand dollars. Two men had been killed, and a score of others had suffered injury. The value of the burned trees would pass a million dollars, figured at current prices and with no allowance for timber famines of the future.

At the now almost deserted fire-camp Slugger O'Neill's boys gathered around to say good-bye to him.

"Gosh, Slugger, it's been a great summer! . . . Won't ever forget all this! . . . Thanks for everything!"

"Well, so long, boys!" said Slugger. "You're a swell bunch o' fire-eaters!"

They climbed into the waiting bus. "I'll remember that straight-arm trick you showed us; she ought to be good in a broken field. . . . Gee, I hate to go back to the old school grind! . . . See you next summer!"

They looked back a last time at Slugger making them a thumbs-up sign.

"Even Slugger looks all in," said one of them suddenly.

"You ain't so daisy-fresh either," said another one. And then as they looked at one another, they all laughed a little glumly.

Yet, though they were so tired they were about to fall asleep in their seats, they were all happy boys, for they knew they had done a job among men.

When he looked across to the man on the other horse, Bart saw that the Supervisor was trying to smile at him.

"I'm thinking of some of the places I used to like to go," Bart said.

"It's hard to tell about it all, Bart. The way a rabbit thinks, a brush-field must be the Garden of Eden, compared to a pine forest. In nature — whatever that means — a raw gullied canyon-side may be just as good as a fine slope of trees. The difference in our minds."

"That's a big difference to me," said Bart.

She ate lunch, and then cleaned herself up as well as she could. She put on some well-pressed gray slacks, and her dark-green man's shirt, open at the throat. She did the best she could with her hair.

The afternoon was sunny, and she kept alert. But she saw nothing big

enough to think twice about. The tanker-crew and a couple of other men were in full sight. She wished they would go away.

"Girls that live in glass houses shouldn't have callers in the day-time," she thought. But she reflected that she might stand beside the fire-finder, as close to the center of the lookout as possible, and probably anyone looking up from the ground would not be able to see what went on there. . . . "Yes, children, I first met your father at a forest-fire!"

When he came that afternoon, she solved the glass-house problem by standing right next to the fire-finder, and it worked very well.

Then they stood close together on the east catwalk, looking for smokes — but there weren't any. She told him many things — of how, for instance, she got her Spanish name because some great-great-grandmother fell in love with a Californian and let him carry her off one night (so the family story went) on a tall black stallion.

"Well," he said, "I've got no black stallion. Would a red jeep do?"

"Considering how times have changed, I'll think it over. . . . Yes, that would be very satisfactory."

Smoke and cloud had vanished. Through the rain-washed air the sun shone brightly, and along the crest of the range the highest peaks were dazzling-white with snow. Moist and clean, the northwest wind from the ocean blew steadily across the long ridges, and from high-swinging cones, opened by the fiery heat, the winged seeds drifted downward to the earth.



Literary Cavalcade's New Monthly Prize Contest

Write a Winning Letter

• Win a Cash Prize

● What have you read during the past month that you liked especially well? And why did you like it? It doesn't matter where you read what you liked best or what it was. It might be a book, a short story, a magazine article, a newspaper story or an editorial — anything. Just write a letter telling what you read, where you read it, and *why* you liked it. Letters should be 300 words or less. Send your letters to Letter Contest, *Literary Caval-*

cade, 7 East 12 St., New York 3, N. Y. For the best letter each month *Literary Cavalcade* will award \$15. Second prize will be \$10; third prize \$5. Each month's winning letter will be published in *Literary Cavalcade*. Remember, your letter need not be about something you read in *Literary Cavalcade*. It can be about *anything, anywhere!* Get busy now!

Entries for October close October 15.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER?

A Quiz Based on the Contents of This Issue

The Challenge of Knowledge

The problem stated by Mr. Raymond Fosdick is the most urgent one facing the world today. Restate that problem in a 50-word summary.

Can you think of any recent developments that seem to prove Mr. Fosdick's point? What can you do in your school or community to meet the challenge that Mr. Fosdick presents? What nationally prominent individuals and groups are working on the problem? Are you familiar with the Rockefeller Foundation and its work? What do you know about Mr. Fosdick's famous brother, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick?

Mr. Fosdick wrote "The Challenge of Knowledge" as an address. It contains certain tricks of style that are natural to a good speaker and that distinguish a speech from writing. What are they?

Mutiny

The title, "Mutiny," may be interpreted three ways. It refers to the original "mutiny on the Bounty," later to the mutiny of the convicts against the governor of the island, and finally to the mutiny of the Bounty descendants against the Navy Commander who wishes to destroy the most beautiful site on the island for an airstrip. How are these three distinct interpretations unified and developed throughout the story? This is fundamentally a story of conflict — a conflict of purposes and values. What is the nature of the conflict? Who are the key figures? Do you think the U. S. Navy justified in its action? Why or why not?

You first see Fry through the Commander's eyes. Your impression is that he is a moral weakling, a buck-passer. What happens toward the end of the story that helps to correct that first impression?

Sorry, Wrong Number

If your spine has stopped tingling, you might try answering these questions. Put a check mark before the word or phrase that you think best completes each of the statements.

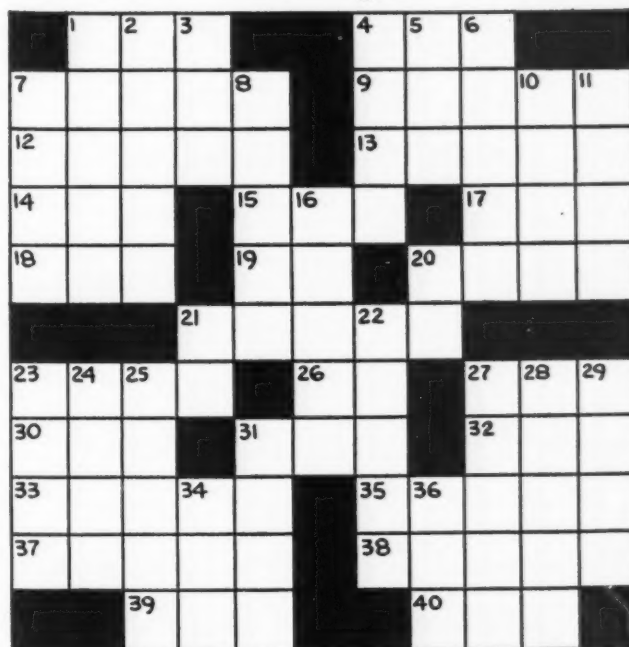
- In medical terms, Mrs. Stevenson is a
— (a) querulous person; — (b) imperious person;
— (c) neurotic
- She becomes aware that she is "on the spot" when
— (a) her husband's telegram arrives.
— (b) she hears the murderer on the extension down stairs.
— (c) Sergeant Duffy doesn't believe her story.
- A good example of dramatic irony is
— (a) George's reply to Sergeant Duffy: "Sorry, wrong number."
— (b) the busy signal at the police station.
— (c) Mrs. Stevenson's description of her maid.
- George's speech at the end of the play comes in
— (a) on the filter; — (b) in the clear.

Fire

We hope that after you've read this condensation of *Fire* you'll read the complete novel. To see how well you remember the condensed version, however, fill in the word or phrase that best completes each of the following statements.

- The heroes of this novel are _____
- The villain is _____
- Throughout the novel, a comparison is drawn between fire-fighting and _____
- The section of forest that is cleared to check the advance of a fire is called a _____

This Will Cast a Spell Over You



ACROSS

- An article
- Past tense of "is"
- That place
- Wrong or improper, as in "Something is _____"
- Having to do with the kidneys
- Your sister or brother's daughter.
- Atmosphere
- One act play by Eugene O'Neill
- Obtained
- Inspect inquisitively
- Abbrev. for District Attorney
- Spouts or planes propelled by compressed air
- Uncanny or unearthly
- "The _____ Ranger"
- Latin or French for "You"
- Poetic word for "often"
- Defunct price control agency (initials)
- "Comin' through the _____"
- Nanki-_____, son of *The Mikado*
- Grasp possession of
- Burning, ardent
- Closing stanza of a ballad
- Kinds
- Long periods of time
- Negative

DOWN

- Belonging to them
- _____ IV, play by Shakespeare
- Age; period of time not as long as 39 Across
- Diminish; grow less
- French for "friend"
- To surround a place to force its surrender is to lay _____ to it
- Snare
- Cut off or omit a syllable of a word
- Native of the country that gave us Robert Burns
- Places or puts
- Laymen, as a group
- Abbrev. for Doctor of Laws
- Book by Charles Lindbergh
- Sandbars
- Antonym of win
- Antonym of shut
- Simple or unaffected
- Plural of opus; also a music drama
- Two score
- Playthings
- Used to control a horse
- Menagerie.
- Electrified particle in chemistry or physics

Answer to puzzle on page 31. Don't peek!

- A _____ is kindled just within the line in order to meet and check the advance of the main fire.
- _____ is the term applied to the operator of a caterpillar tractor.
- An _____ is an instrument used by a lookout to find the exact location of a lightning strike.

Answers in Teacher Lesson Plan

About the Scholastic Writing Awards

THE Scholastic Awards have been called the "Pulitzer Prizes" of the high school world. They are annual competitions for senior and junior high school students in many branches of creative expression, conducted by *Scholastic Magazines* and public-spirited sponsors.

Regional and national honors and prizes await Awards winners. The best of the prize-winning entries will be published in the annual Student Achievement Issue, the May, 1949, issue of *Literary Cavalcade*. To find out how you may enter your work in the Scholastic Awards, ask your teacher for a copy of the *Rules Booklet*.

On this page are words of advice and encouragement from two of last year's Writing Awards judges.

THE LADDER

The most important thing ever to happen to me, after I discovered, at six, that I was a writer, was seeing myself in print. This is something that outshines first holding your first-born son in your arms. It is a kind of discovery of life itself.

Now I went to schools that had no school paper. I had to depend on the wider world. Luckily, there was a Boston newspaper that ran a Boys' and Girls' Column. We had to write under a pseudonym, but there was no other rein held on us. We could write anything we wanted to write—poems, essays, stories, plays—and draw pictures to go along with them.

I shall never forget seeing the first printed words over my name. I grew a foot that day. From then on, I gave to art every instant I could spare from sawing the kitchen wood and milking the cow. I turned out lyrics, eclogues, epics, stories, pen-and-ink pictures, and even a novel. My feet were on the ladder. There was no turning back. I got no money for all this writing. I got something better. Joy. A second mysterious, finer self. I got to be the being I dreamed of being. I got wings.

Today, it is much easier for boys and girls to grow wings young, when wings should start growing. There is a country-wide magazine for them, *Senior Scholastic*, and every year all boys and girls in American schools are invited to become poets, story-tellers, and artists in competition. There are prizes, but they are less important than the fame, the wings themselves. Girls and boys don't have to wait till they are out of school to sprout wings; they can do it while they are in.

I don't know how far I could have gone if I had had Scholastic Writing Awards to start in. But I should be a lot farther up the ladder.

It is a ladder you boys and girls better get on now.

Robert P. Tristram Coffin

Author of books of biography, history, essays, novels and ten volumes of poetry. Pulitzer Prize winner for poetry in 1936. Judge in Poetry Division of Scholastic Writing Awards.

KEEP WRITING—AND REWRITING

About twenty years ago I had the singular good fortune to win one of the *Scholastic* literary awards—a third prize in poetry. Although, about five years after that, I ceased to write poetry altogether and began to work in my chosen medium, fiction, I feel that Scholastic Awards did a great

deal for me—gave me a conviction that I might reasonably harbor hopes for a literary career, presented me with an opportunity to meet other young people who were writers like myself, helped me to see what sort of thing was being written, and was likely to be written in the future by members of my generation.

There are a few rules that I would suggest to those students who are thinking of entering Scholastic Awards this year; they are simple rules, but ones which I think any author will profit by following:

1. Write what you really think. Under no circumstances change your basic convictions, either for the sake of the story or for the sake of pleasing those who are likely to read it.
2. Write about what you know. Your own world—your experiences and the things you've actually seen and heard—is as good as anybody's world. Write about it.
3. Don't be afraid to rewrite, five, ten, even fifteen times. The notion that the first version is best is the lazy man's way of soothing his own conscience. What is written at fever heat will be all the better for several long looks in the icy cold.
4. Don't show your work to other people until you've done everything about it that you can possibly do. Many a good author is discouraged by harsh criticism of an unfinished manuscript.
5. Consider every sentence, every word, as important. Don't give one paragraph all your tender attentions and neglect another. The tone of a manuscript is made up of the tone of every part of it. Every word, every phrase, every paragraph, is worth your best efforts.
6. Keep in practice by writing all the time. The writer's skill, like any other skill, grows rusty with neglect. Write a little every day, even though you produce only what looks like a useless paragraph.
7. Be sure you know where your work is going. Every good piece of writing—essay, poem, short story, or novel—should start at a given point and move without meandering toward a foreknown conclusion. Your reader wants the sense of your accomplishment, and he has a right to know what you're talking about.

Gladys Schmitt

Author of the novels *The Gates of Aulis* (Dial Award for 1942), *David the King* (Literary Guild selection), and *Alexandra*. Judge in the Essay Division of Scholastic Writing Awards.